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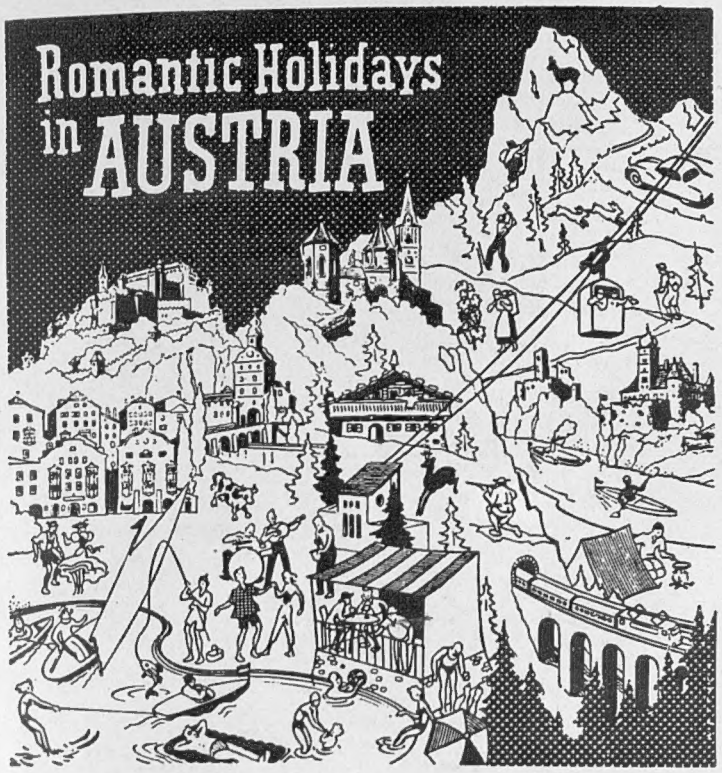

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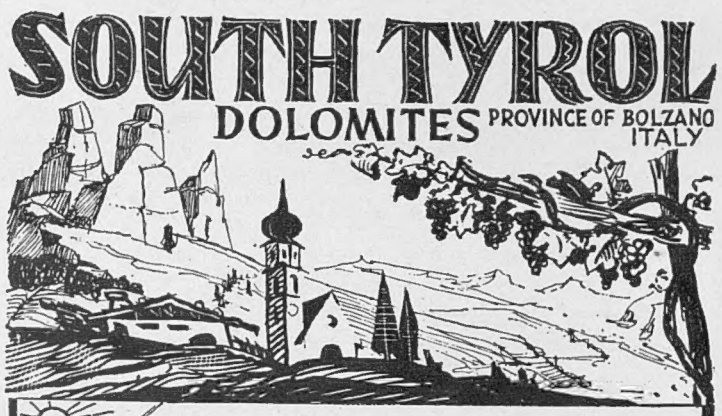

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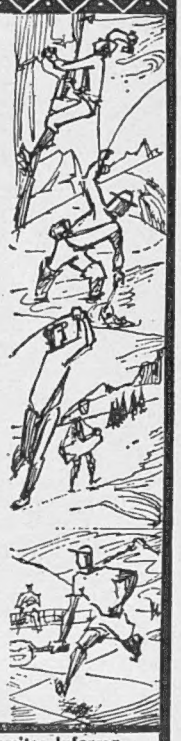

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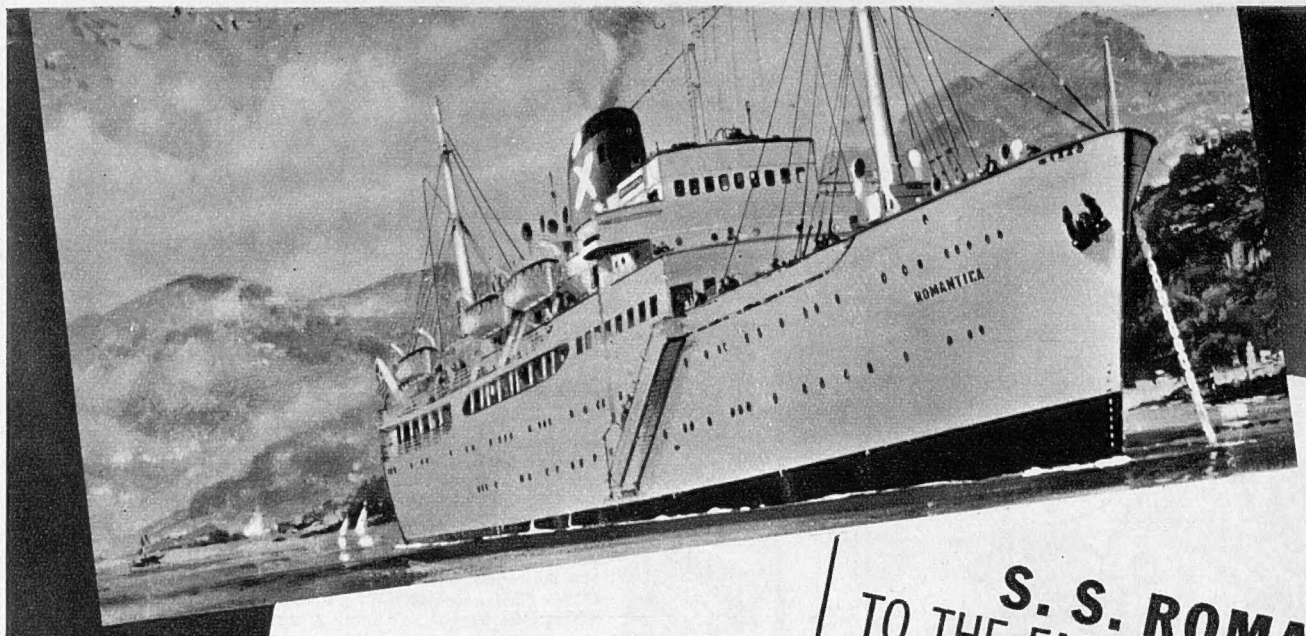

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THE SPHERE

LONDON, January 27, 1962

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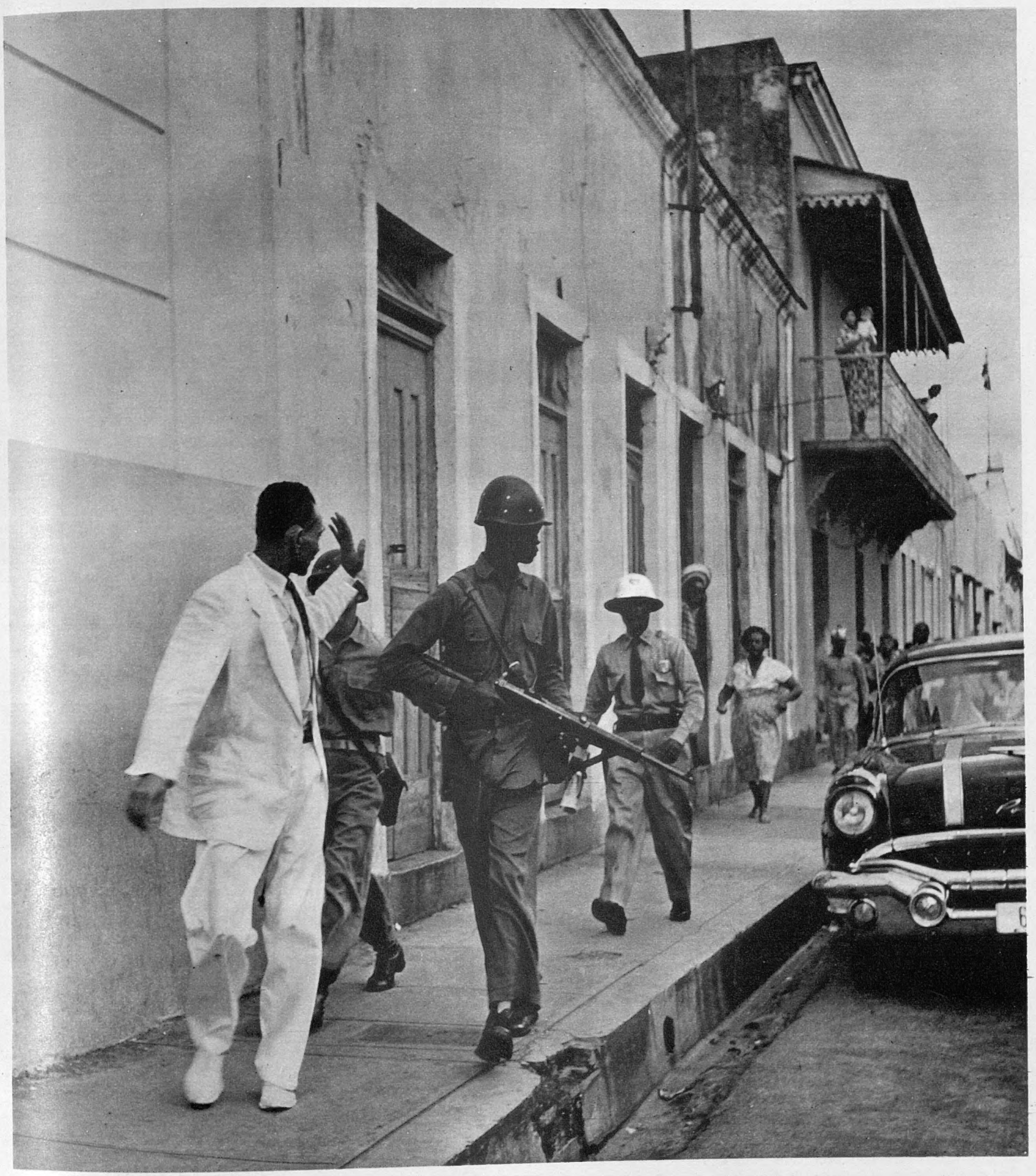

DOMINICAN UPHEAVAL

A Dominican is escorted by two soldiers through the streets of Santo Domingo, the capital of the Dominican Republic, after being rescued from a mob accusing him of being a Trujillo supporter. As he is hurried through the streets members of the crowd follow. The incident took place during the wave of serious riots in the Caribbean state which last week led to the resignation of President Balaguer. It was reported that power had passed into the hands of a seven-man junta, dominated by the military, and that later this junta was itself overthrown. The coup was watched with close attention in Washington. The U.S. State Department had strongly supported attempts to set up a democratic Government under President Balaguer. Last week, it was announced that the U.S. Government would take economic sanctions against any militaristic regime in the Republic. The Dominican situation was likely to be one of the subjects discussed by the Foreign Ministers of the Organisation of American States, meeting this week at Punta del Este in Uruguay. In 1960, the O.A.S. imposed economic sanctions on the Dominican Republic

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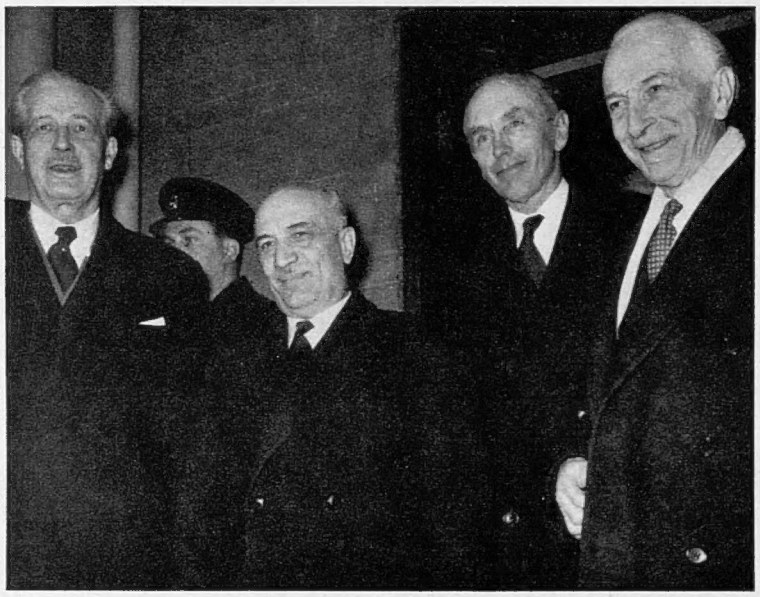
The new 33,500-ton Union-Castle liner *Transvaal Castle* is watched by sightseers as she moves slowly down Southampton Water to start her maiden voyage to South Africa. The twin-screw turbine vessel is scheduled to cover the 6,000 miles to Cape Town in thirteen-and-a-half days, and will leave Southampton at eight-weekly intervals. An important feature of this new "hotel class" liner is that, although not a one-class ship, there is no segregation of those who have paid different prices for tickets. The *Transvaal Castle* can carry 700 passengers and is fitted with stabilisers



SIGNOR FANFANI AND SIGNOR SEGNI IN LONDON FOR TALKS

Below right: Mr. Macmillan, Signor Fanfani, the Italian Prime Minister, Lord Home, and Signor Segni, the Italian Foreign Minister, are at London Airport. The Italian Ministers were in Britain last week for a day of talks with Mr. Macmillan and Lord Home, at which Mr. Heath, the Lord Privy Seal, was also present. A communiqué issued after the talks said that the Ministers had "examined in a most friendly spirit the development of negotiations for Britain's entry into the European Economic Community." Also considered were the long-term political aspects of West European integration, and Berlin, on which the Italian Government has supported the British viewpoint that East-West negotiations are desirable. As Signor Fanfani left London Airport it was announced that the Italian Government had agreed in principle to the lifting of Italian quota restrictions on the import of British cars

AN ANGLO-RUSSIAN CONVERSATION

Far right: The British C.I.G.S. Sir Richard Hull, is engaged in earnest discussion with the Soviet Military Attaché in London, Major-General Ivan P. Efimov. They were among the many distinguished military personalities who attended a reception which was given last week at Claridge's Hotel, in London, for Foreign Military Attachés in Great Britain, by the Military Division of the War Office

AT THE BRITAIN-BURMA SOCIETY RECEPTION

Princess Alexandra of Kent gives a welcoming handshake to Mimi Tin Maung, from Burma, at a reception given by the Britain-Burma Society. The reception was held last week at the Royal Overseas League in London. Last autumn Princess Alexandra enjoyed a successful tour of various countries, in the Far East, including Burma

THE TAY SALMON-FISHING SEASON OPENS

Far right: Miss Susan Allison, Assistant Manageress of the Breadalbane Hotel at Kenmore, Perthshire, Scotland, pauses before breaking the traditional bottle of whisky over the bow of one of the salmon-fishing boats at the opening of the Tay Salmon Fishing Season. This took place last week on the banks of Loch Tay, near the town of Kenmore

THE NEWS IN PICTURES

Demonstrators march down the Avenida da Liberdade, in Lisbon, to protest against the loss of Goa and to express their gratitude for Spanish support over the situation. At the Spanish Embassy, a spokesman of the demonstrators, who included hundreds of students, handed over a message addressed to General Franco. The banners in the demonstrations last week in Lisbon carried messages praising Spain and some had such anti-British slogans as "Down with the Alliance." But later at a Press conference in Lisbon, Dr. Nogueira, the Portuguese Foreign Minister, made it clear that there had been no change in Portugal's attitude towards the alliance with Britain or membership of the U.N.

PORTUGUESE DEMONSTRATIONS IN LISBON OVER GOA

Below right: In Helsinki, the Speaker of the Finnish Parliament, Mr. Fagerholm, and his wife cast their votes in the Presidential election. The result of this was a clear personal victory for Dr. Kekkonen, the present President, in a poll to choose the 300 members of the electoral college. Dr. Kekkonen gained 146 electoral seats, and can expect support from most of the others, except the Socialists, who lost heavily and managed only 36 seats. Dr. Kekkonen was the only non-Socialist candidate. The election was fought on the issue of foreign policy, especially relations with the Soviet Union

THE FINNISH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS

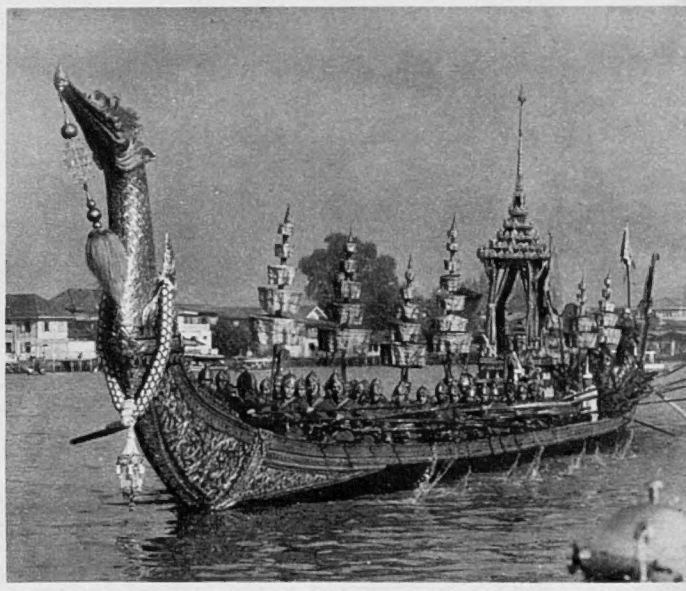
Far right: Two members of the Tunisian Government, Bahi Ladgham (left) and Sadok Mokkadem, arrive at Orly airport, Paris. They went to the French capital last week for the resumption of ministerial negotiations at the Quai d'Orsay with M. Couve de Murville for a settlement of the Bizerta dispute. The Tunisian Ministers pressed for an eventual French withdrawal from the Bizerta base

FRANCO—TUNISIAN TALKS OVER BIZERTA

Clouds of smoke and flames billow out of the windows of an office building and store in the centre of Nuremburg, in West Germany. In the disaster last week, twenty people died and others were injured, including five firemen, as the fire swept through the building. Several of those who died were killed after they jumped from the upper windows of the building

A DISASTROUS FIRE IN NUREMBURG

Far right: During a pageant at Bangkok, in honour of the visit to Thailand of King Frederik and Queen Ingrid of Denmark, a traditional and highly ornamental war canoe is paddled past the reviewing stands. As the guests of King Bhumipol and Queen Sirikit, the Danish Royal couple have been paying a thirteen-day official visit to Thailand, which included tours of many parts of the country



ON SHOW FOR THE DANISH ROYAL VISIT TO THAILAND

Armoured cars on patrol in the streets of Jakarta. They were taking part in exercises which followed Dr. Sukarno's mobilisation order last month

INDONESIA PREPARES

Despite the training of large numbers of volunteers and the naval action to the south of West New Guinea last week, in which Dutch forces sank an Indonesian motor torpedo boat and set another on fire, the crisis appeared to be unlikely to erupt in the immediate future. The incident seemed to have been provoked for propaganda purposes, rather than as part of an invasion plan. At the weekend President Sukarno was reported in Jakarta to have informed U Thant, the acting United Nations Secretary-General, that he was leaving the door open for a peaceful settlement of the West Irian dispute with the Dutch, that would be honourable for both sides.

Volunteers offering to fight for Indonesia assemble in Singapore

Repatriates from West New Guinea disembark in Amsterdam

An Indonesian Army recruit trains to attack with his bamboo spear

The Dutch Prime Minister, Professor J. E. de Quay, speaks at a Press conference

Students from the University of Indonesia take part in voluntary military training

JOHN CONNELL

THE IMPERFECT INSTRUMENT

When I was young and very poor, thirty years ago or thereabouts, I lived for a twelve-month in a somewhat polyglot household in a grim, mud-grey street in a gone-to-seed area, which its inhabitants called West Kensington, but which the electoral register called East Fulham. Its proprietress, a buxom, generous and feckless woman, ran two adjoining houses as a bed-and-breakfast lodging house-cum-school. One or two quiet elderly residents paid their rent regularly and kept themselves to themselves. Others were a great deal more exotic, far noisier, and financially utterly unreliable.

There was a West African student, who is now an honoured elder statesman in a country whose name wild horses will not drag from me; there was a girl from Finland; there were, for several weeks in the summer, two lamentable Germans who erupted frequently into Nazi propaganda; there was a handsome *wagon-lit* character, who spent an enormous amount of time muttering confidences into the one telephone which served the two houses. And there were the school children, yowling, squabbling, screaming, getting and giving measles, chickenpox, whooping-cough and other ailments, spoilt, neurotic, exhibitionist and furtively lustful.

The proprietress, when in sunny mood, when the trusties had paid their week's rent (in cash), when the horrible brats had been dispersed to their homes, and a semi-peaceful week-end loomed ahead, would treat herself to a tiny glass of whatever was in the drawing room, and observe in bright sweet tones: " We 're quite a little League of Nations, aren't we? "

In my raw, hurt youth I regarded a set-up of this kind with a harsh intolerance. It was a mess and a muddle, squalid, corrupt and corrupting, silly and inefficient; but a fact which I slurred over was that *I was part of it*. It was my only haven and home in the bitter blizzard of the slump; imperfect it certainly was, but it was something to cling to in a manifestly and violently imperfect world.

Superficially the vast glittering palace of the United Nations Organisation, a-flutter with flags, thronged with delegations, officials, lobbyists and rubber-necks, bears no resemblance to my dingy West Kensington boarding-house. But its—and our—predicament is very like that which angered and scared me so much so long ago. We, the British, are like one of the steady, untroublesome trusties—for example, the Honourable Mrs. Whatever-it-was, who had two rooms in the basement (" charming garden flat " it was called), lived on digestive biscuits and hot water, and covered her mantelpiece with framed, faded photographs of long-dead Central European princes and princesses.

We pay with clockwork regularity. We try to observe a code of conduct and of manners which our neighbours and associates treat with open, boorish contempt. The foundations of our world have long since been sapped, and we hug our memories to us like a moth-eaten fur tippet we once wore to the opera. The others, noisy, neurotic brats, insult us, snarl at us, and live off such money as they can browbeat or cozen out of us.

M. Spaak, the Belgian Foreign Minister, arrives in New York for the re-opening of the U.N. General Assembly. Among the first subjects for discussion was the future of the Belgian-administered trust territory of Ruanda-Urundi

Last week after the brief intermission of the Christmas holidays, during which British and American officials, gathered in Washington, had sought to agree upon some reforms which might introduce a little political sanity and financial regularity into the affairs of the United Nations, the Assembly met again, and went zestfully off on another anti-colonialist witch-hunt. The trouble with the Washington meeting was that, while Britain and the United States are in full agreement on the fact that U.N.O. is in a grievous pickle, they differ profoundly both about the causes of the mess, and about the methods of remedying it. Officials, however exalted and however worthy their intentions, could not build a lasting bridge across this gulf.

The Americans, characteristically, concentrated on the financial aspects of the pickle—on the simple, easily remediable fact that the United Nations Organisation is on the verge of bankruptcy. They have plans to launch a huge bonds scheme, and they pressed the British to contribute to the full extent of their resources. I remember only too well when my West Kensington landlady found a sugar-daddy; he stopped the telephone, the electricity and the gas from being cut off, and the milkman smiled for a week or two; but it was not—as the subsequent and final disaster demonstrated—a real or lasting remedy.

U.N.O. is not in a mess because it is nearly bankrupt. It is nearly bankrupt because it is itself, morally and politically, in a whale of a mess. Lord Home was courageous enough to point out, discreetly but cogently, some of the reasons for the mess, and took a tremendous caning from the ideologues, to whom one word of criticism of the U.N. is rank blasphemy.

The new entry of nations, mainly Asian and African, has more than doubled U.N.O.'s membership. This enlargement need not, of itself, have been catastrophic; it was under the provisions of the Charter inevitable. But it is the political, intellectual and moral calibre of some of the new entry—not all by any means—which is extremely questionable. International problems, in much less complex and dangerous times, demanded (and got) years of arduous and careful study from those few who became Foreign Ministers and Ambassadors. Those who took major decisions on policy had—in general—a common culture, a common civilisation and a common standard of ethics. Neither of these claims can be made about those who throng the debating chamber, the committee rooms and the lobbies of U.N. Headquarters. The diversities of outlook are in many ways very great. European civilisation, fragmented and fatigued almost beyond endurance by its two fratricidal wars, its own values smirched by the practice of genocide, possesses now neither numerical nor moral superiority over the rest of the world. Even the illusion of briefly-held scientific and technological superiority is vanishing.

The United States, with its vast material resources, its undimmed optimism and its inherited belief in the unconquerable ability of man, is by nature sympathetic with, and it seems to me, deeply uncomprehending of, African and Asian aspirations. Locked in its ideological conflict with the Soviet Union, it is apt to see Europe as an obsolescent encumbrance, and to hope that, by development loans, subsidies in and for the United Nations and countless other material and monetary devices, it can buy African and Asian friendship. A distorted view of American history in the eighteenth century supplies the basis for a sustained and perverse support for the demand for the instant and total liquidation of colonialism.

Few Americans, however enlightened, compare the fate of—for example—the Iroquois, a noble pastoral people now, under American rule, extinct, with that of the Masai, another noble pastoral people who, under British rule, multiplied, prospered and preserved their traditional way of life. And most British spokesmen are far too polite, far too diffident, and far too conscious of the stresses of the new Anglo-American relationship to make this valuable comparison.

The motives underlying the Washington discussions were excellent —on both sides—but from the outset those discussions were doomed to a particularly depressing kind of futility. Within a few hours of their inconclusive conclusion the General Assembly resumed its sixteenth session, with (as *The Times* put it, with surprising outspokenness) " the anti-colonialist powers in full cry "; and Britain, patient, persevering, fully paid-up Britain, was one of the preys. Just before the adjournment our pursuers brought up two matters, under the pretence of " seeking information about non-self-governing territories ": the status of Southern Rhodesia and the date for British Guiana's attainment of independence. On neither of these (the Washington talks notwithstanding) could Britain look for any help or backing from the United States.

The British Guiana affair appeared to be trumped up deliberately by Dr. Jagan; and the demand for a special committee to investigate the status of Southern Rhodesia, made by ten Afro-Asian countries and Jugoslavia, was in pursuance of the campaign which is being maintained against the Central African Federation, and its Prime Minister, Sir Roy Welensky. The attacks on Britain are being made, be it noted, by the representatives of countries which habitually ignore the payment of their U.N. subscriptions and are as much in debt to Britain as to U.N.O.

Heartbreak House, New York City, in the year 1962, differs hardly at all, it seems to me, from Heartbreak House, W.14 in the year 1932, except that I could (and did one day) walk out from that dismal place; now, because there is no alternative, we cannot (in President Kennedy's bleak phrase) " abandon this imperfect world instrument because we dislike our imperfect world."

For a few days the avalanche in Northern Peru, which destroyed the village of Ranrahirca and killed several thousand people, made newspaper headlines and then was forgotten. But for the peasants, living on the slopes of Mount Huascaran in the Andes, the days of tragedy continued. The survivors of the small mountain communities, who had escaped the avalanche of snow, mud and rocks, returned to search for the bodies of relatives and neighbours. The picture shows a party of peasants carrying one of their dead into a village which was out of the avalanche's path. In the weeks following the tragedy, the homeless were found shelter and given supplies flown into the inaccessible region. It is unlikely that the exact number of people who died will ever be established. Bodies buried under many feet of mud and stones may never be discovered. Only an estimate can be made based on last year's census of those living on farms or in mining communities in the remote valleys of the Huaras area

AFTERMATH OF TRAGEDY

b

Stone by stone, Euston Station's Doric Arch is demolished to make way for an improvement scheme

A row of London's trolley-buses, discarded by London Transport, wait to

A London Newsletter

13-15, JOHN ADAM STREET, W.C.2.

NOTE ON THE PAY-PAUSE. Perhaps the first stage of the pay-pause has achieved some of the benefits the Government hoped from it. Its machinery has certainly creaked. I have envied no post-war Chancellor and I fancy this pay-pause has marked Mr. Lloyd. It has certainly given me the impression that, though the senior Ministers of our Government may be in tune with the infinite, they are not in touch with the feelings of our modern democracy. These feelings may be petty and self-centred but they are understandable and deserve study. I idly wonder how a man like Lord Woolton (who managed to make us cheerfully endure war austerity in our food) would have handled the pay-pause. He knew the common man and would certainly have studied him before launching his campaign. The common man needs first to be persuaded of the gravity of a national crisis and then to be assured that all classes will share in any necessary sacrifices. He is often ill-informed and does not realise that enormous salaries paid to key-men in industry are modest enough when Mr. Bloodsucker has taken his toll of them. Lord Woolton would never have launched his pay-pause on the morrow of announcing (quite unnecessarily so early) a super tax concession up to £5,000 a year, nor would he have baldly announced a £24,000 a year salary for Dr. Beeching. He would, I feel sure, have persuaded the Government that an example from the top—even a token gesture—was essential if the pay-pause were to be accepted, he would have pressed Ministers voluntarily to forgo a small percentage of their salaries and invited Dr. Beeching and his like to do the same; and he would have been careful to broadcast the precise income which Dr. B. would have for spending after tax deductions. Then having set the stage and assured the nation that the difficult research into taxing profits was already under way, he would have launched his pay-pause, and I make no doubt it would have proved less unpopular and ragged than it has. I don't "hate the Tories," as some declare they do. I am sure they are honourable men and hardworking, but I do think that their continuance in office for another term in some degree depends on their studying more sympathetically the mind of the common man and making more allowances for it, even if it appears to them to be petty and ignorant and even self-centred. They handled the pay-pause clumsily through this neglect and have only themselves to blame for some of the "capitalist" and other charges preferred against them. If government is indeed to be by the people as well as for the people, the mind of the common man is an essential study for governments as a preliminary to improving its understanding and sense of responsibility.

TOO MANY BOOKS? I cannot but agree with the view of a librarian that an annual output of 25,000 books is an "absurd" total. It is bad for education, recreation, authors, publishers, critics and readers. A fair proportion of the annual output of new books are written by trained writers who know their subjects and who have put a great deal of research and labour into them and expressed themselves in graceful, lucid English, acquired by practice. A far larger proportion are the work of amateurs, better employed still in learning the ropes of *ars scribendi*. The spate of new titles has an inevitable effect on reviewing. Reviewers and critics find their tables weighed down by new titles which they cannot possibly even skim through; and, if they could, their columns could not carry the reviews. Sport aces are seldom qualified to write, but many of them do so. Some of them are not even competent journalists. Amateur females tackle historical studies without deigning first to mug up the conditions of life or the language current in the chosen period. And there is an appalling sameness in the trivial reminiscences of the "Great Days" by the Lady Addles of Eigg. Publishers take a 100 to 1 chance on

Mr. Randolph Churchill unveils the L.C.C. plaque to his grandfather, the late Lord Randolph Churchill, in Connaught Place, London. No. 2, Connaught Place, was the home of Sir Winston Churchill's father from 1883–1892

rapped at a depot at Colindale, Middlesex

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Ramsey, addresses the Convocation of Canterbury, meeting at Church House, Westminster

A trolley-bus is stripped of its fittings before being burnt

75 per cent. of the books they accept, in the hope that one of them one day will turn out a winner; and, with novels and comics, it is quite impossible for their advisers to spot that rarity which the public will decide to gobble. Publishers no doubt pay their overheads with a small number of proven successes, while the riff-raff they put out are a form of premium bonds. One day, " Ernie " may toss them a prize. Until he does, they are lucky if they can dispose of 300 copies of the average title.

SAFETY BELTS. It is no doubt true that we take our lives in our hands when we drive over the roads of Britain and no doubt a paternal minister is within his rights and duty to offer us his latest ideas on how to reduce our risks. Safety belts, for instance; though how safe safety belts are is still unsure. They may save face, but some medical opinion considers they may perhaps increase the risks of spinal injury. Before taking the minister's advice, I prefer to wait for longer experience of this safety device. And, if and when its over-riding benefits are generally accepted, I hope no paternal government will dare to make it obligatory for motorists. No doubt it is right to make it obligatory for us to halt at red lights and not to infringe double-white lines, for there the safety of other road-users is involved, but the safety belt is a " selfish " device, a base expedient for *self*-preservation only, and one of our surviving freedoms which we cherish beyond measure is to go to the devil our own way on the Queen's Highway. The Suicide Club of the *New Arabian Nights* would have lost most of its appeal to its jaded members, if the lucky number had only involved a visit to the outpatients' waiting room. Let us keep the romance of the road for our club members. Let safety belts remain ripe for development by private initiative.

" READING IN BED." *The Times* is a master of the art of the lighter form of entertainment in their symposia in the correspondence column, and usually I am sorry when one such theme is withdrawn. " Reading in bed " was perhaps an exception. It inspired less than the customary amusement and ingenuity. The problem is solved by taking a paper-back to bed, and paper-backs are not of necessity frivolous reading. Whether his bedroom is warm or icy cold, any fool can read a small paper-back in bed without recourse to fur gloves or chest protectors, if his bedside lamp hangs on the head-rail; and only a fool takes to bed with him a volume of *Encyclopædia Britannica* or *D.N.B.*, good reading as they are. Paper-backs have the widest possible range of subject, light, serious and exciting, from the *Plays of Sophocles* to Josephine Tey's *Franchise Affair*. The latter, of course, may keep you reading into the small hours; the former is more likely to satisfy the healthy ration of this pleasant habit, which should be limited to minutes, not hours.

LOOKING UP AND DOWN. Curiosity, they say, killed the cat and is one of the main reasons for two conflicting modern impetuses, to reach up for the stars and to dig down into the bowels of our own small star to learn more of its ancient history. Of the two, I am more interested in the latter. You can 'ave the Moon and Venus and Mars, and don't bother me with progress reports; but I am wildly interested in the latest finds in archæological diggings, and if I had my life to live again, I should choose training in archæological research. It is hard to remain unmoved by the latest discovery near Stonehenge of a deep shaft at Wilsford already dug 100 ft. deep, unknown in Britain hitherto, which may possibly be Mycenæan in origin and confirm latest theories of the mysterious story of Stonehenge. There is more excitement for many of us in Maiden Castle than in all the rockets that ever bore up heroic men into orbit and in the proofs of how the Romans stormed that vast fort than in all the conquests of space in our own day; and the small treasures from time to time unearthed in barrows newly turned and on the sites of rediscovered Roman villas supply for me the romance I find nowhere else today. Ancient and modern history, past, present and future—I stand beside Goldsmith's Squire in *She Stoops to Conquer*: " I love everything that's old, old friends, old times, old manners and old books . . ." I much prefer to stoop to conquer knowledge. Some of us are too old to hope for any benefits from the knowledge gained by reaching up.

THE OLD STAGER

IN NEXT WEEK'S ISSUE

SOUTH AMERICA

The background to Prince Philip's forthcoming visit

In the Throne Room at Alexandria Palace, Cleopatra, played by Elizabeth Taylor (also **below** left), is crowned by the High Priestess (Pamela Brown). Left is Cæsar (Rex Harrison)

ENTERTAINMENT

CLEOPATRA

On location and in the studios at Rome

Like Shakespeare's Antony, Twentieth Century-Fox must often have felt that they "must from this enchanting Queen break off," as their mammoth film of *Cleopatra* ran into difficulty after difficulty culminating in the illness of the star, Elizabeth Taylor. Last autumn, however, things began to go much better: a new director took over, Joseph L. Mankiewicz, with a new script he had partly written himself; the studios were changed from London to Rome; and Elizabeth Taylor recovered. Shot in Todd-AO and De Luxe Colour, *Cleopatra* should be finished this spring and released by the end of the year. Its stars, besides Elizabeth Taylor, are Rex Harrison as Cæsar and Richard Burton as Antony. Covering 12 acres at the Cinecitta Studios in Rome, the set for the Roman Forum consists of thirty buildings and cost over £500,000. Several of the pictures on these pages show parts of this set, used in the spectacular procession of Cleopatra into Rome.

Part of the procession into Rome

wild and warlike African dance is one of the sequences in the spectacular procession which precedes Cleopatra's entry into the Forum in Rome

Snake dancers take part in the procession

Another part of the spectacular entry is the "flag" dance

THE VOICE OF THE COMMON

AUSTRALIA

Bush-fires—a recurrent natural hazard

The disastrous bush-fires that have taken a heavy toll in forest regions of Victoria recently highlight a recurrent natural hazard that confronts many landholders in Australia's eastern States. Minor, localised fires are common during the hot months of the Australian summer, but fires such as those that have caused such destruction in Victoria this year occur less frequently and their impact is usually more severe in the more heavily-timbered regions. The risk of fire is generally greatest when there has been a dry spell just before the start of the summer months, leaving grass and litter on the forest floor tinder-dry.

Bush-fires have been known since the earliest days of settlement in Australia but it was some years before their precise causes were established. Generally, they were attributed to aboriginal hunters, who started fires to drive out game from forested areas. Later it became clear that many of these early fires had a spontaneous origin. Today, however, carelessness by the public is probably the main cause of bush-fires—a discarded cigarette butt, camp-fires left by picnickers, a lighted match thrown from a car window, improperly conducted burning-off operations by farmers. But even when the most elaborate of fire-prevention measures are observed, an accidental spark from a farm tractor or some natural cause, like lightning, might be the start of a major outbreak. Fire-prevention laws, including blanket restrictions on the lighting of fires in the open during danger periods, provide heavy penalties for carelessness that might lead to fires. But the evidence that might pinpoint the culprit is often destroyed in the blaze.

Fire fighters attack a spreading bush blaze

The various State and district fire-fighting authorities in Australia outlay large sums each year on measures to prevent and combat bush-fires. All publicity mediums are used to educate the public against the fire danger. Networks of observation-posts are established to give early warning of outbreaks, and large volunteer brigades are organised to be called upon in emergencies. New South Wales, for example, has more than 1,800 of these brigades, manned by about 45,000 volunteers. The measures for combating bush-fires are now generally standardised throughout Australia and improvements are continually being made through research and experience. A good deal of the effort has been integrated on a national level, particularly in providing weather information during periods of fire danger.

The total area of forested land in Australia is estimated at about 102,000,000 acres and most of this forest cover is eucalyptus, which is extremely vulnerable to fire. Some of the most damaging bush-fires in Australian history have taken place in Victoria. The worst occurred in January 1939, during a period when maximum temperatures, minimum humidity and maximum wind velocity occurred almost simultaneously. Seventy-one lives were lost, many mills, houses and other property destroyed, as well as millions of acres of forest. There have been no fires to equal these in destructiveness. Modern measures of fire-prevention and control have made it unlikely that fires on this scale could again occur. But while the bush-fire menace is being progressively lessened, it is yet to be entirely eliminated, as the recent fires in Victoria indicate.

NIGERIA

Commonwealth study conference held in Lagos

An unofficial Commonwealth study conference was held from January 8-19 in Lagos. It was arranged by the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) at the request of the Nigerian Federal Government. At the inaugural session the Chief Justice of the Federation, Sir Adetokunboh Ademola, read a goodwill message from the Governor-General of the Federation, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, who was unavoidably absent.

In his speech the Governor-General said: " I had hoped to be able to attend the opening of this epoch-making conference but my many commitments in respect of other duties have made it impossible for me to realise this hope. I am, nevertheless, very happy to welcome the many distinguished persons who have come to Lagos to take part in this conference, and to wish them success in their deliberations. The theme of the conference and the decision to hold it before the conference already scheduled for 1964 in India reflect the new importance which Commonwealth African States have acquired. This importance is, of course, part of the overall importance to which the continent of Africa has now acceded in world politics.

" The intensification of the interplay of power politics in the conduct of international relations and diplomacy among the big powers in the period since the last war, and the achievement of self-government by British and French territories in Africa in the same period and the corresponding decline of Europe's influence in Africa are only two of the multitude of factors which have helped to project Africa to its new position of strategic significance.

" The British Commonwealth is, without doubt, a great influence in Africa. It may be said, with justification, that upon this influence depends the progress of the continent and the stability and harmony of each State. If this influence is wielded in good faith, and with due regard to the legitimate and rightful interest of all concerned, Africa should progress economically, socially and politically at a rate unequalled in history.

" Many and diverse are opinions known to have been expressed in relation to African questions. The question of the future of democracy and democratic institutions in newly independent African States; of the rule of law; of economic independence; of development; of the cold war; and Communism and incipient dictatorship; these, and allied questions, have provided occasion and excuses for the expression of diverse and conflicting views on Africa.

" I am confident that in your discussions you will be impartial, objective and honest. I trust that you will find time to look round for relaxation and entertainment. I thank you all for sparing the time for

Mr. John Profumo, the British Secretary of State for War, inspects the Kenya African Rifles Guard of Honour on arrival at Nairobi Airport. Mr. Profumo was on a three-week tour of the Middle East and East Africa. He spent eight days in Kenya, visiting military and R.A.F. stations. **Right:** Bandsmen playing fanfare trumpets line up outside Cobbe Barracks, Zomba, Nyasaland. Eight silver trumpets were presented to the 1st Battalion, the King's African Rifles, earlier this month. The trumpets, which are valued at £1,300, were bought for the Battalion by the British South Africa Company, the City of Lusaka, the Rhodesian Selection Trust, and the Anglo-American Corporation. The Mayor of Lusaka, Mr. Richard Sampson, made the presentation

WEALTH

this conference and for holding it in Lagos. I wish the conference success."

Delegates attended the conference from twenty Commonwealth countries. Among the subjects discussed were the problem of keeping the cold war out of Africa, the importance of Pan-Africanism, the attitude of African States towards Britain's application to join the Common Market, the achievement of economic independence by African countries, the democratic institutions best suited to the needs of African Planning and Development, and the future of Commonwealth co-operation in Africa.

The items in "The Voice of the Commonwealth" are contributed and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor of "The Sphere"

Delegates from many Commonwealth countries gather at the Second Commonwealth Education Conference. This was opened on Friday, January 12, and lasted two weeks

Africans are trained on board the minesweeper *Rosalind*, one of the two ships of the Royal East African Navy. Recently Mr. Tom Mboya, the Kenya politician, protested against the disbandonment of this navy, which had been announced after the Tanganyika Government had stated that it would no longer share the cost of the Navy

Britain's Minister of Education, Sir David Eccles, and Lady Eccles share a joke with India's Education Minister, Dr. K. L. Shrimali, at a civic reception given by the Mayor of Delhi. Sir David led the British delegation to the Commonwealth Education Conference. The first of these conferences was held at Oxford in 1959

BOOK REVIEW

Conversations with a holy man

Mr. Arthur Osborne has already performed the service to the wider understanding of Hinduism of editing the collected works of Ramana Maharshi for the first time in the English language. He has followed this with a companion volume containing a distillation of the conversations of the celebrated Indian sage, THE TEACHINGS OF RAMANA MAHARSHI (Rider, 21s.). Mr. Osborne has edited these, drawing on the experience of several years spent in the company of Bhagavan, as he is referred to throughout the book. (Bhagavan, it is explained, means "One with the Father"; it was also that name for the Buddha which is translated into English as "The blessed one".) The conversations are grouped under various headings, and the editor has added his own comments to illuminate the dialogue.

Ramana Maharshi was overtaken by a "sudden violent fear of death" at the age of seventeen. This caused him to dramatise the state of death, during which posture he realised "that the body dies but the spirit that transcends it cannot be touched by death." From that time on he describes himself as being absorbed in the Universal Self, making his way to Tiruvannamalai, where he spent the rest of his life in this transformed state. Mr. Osborne writes in his preface, "Very rare are the cases when it remains permanent." The Maharshi attracted many disciples there before his death in the early 1950's.

The main purpose of his teaching was to direct people towards the Realisation of the Self, as opposed to the ego. "This ego or individual being is the root of all that is futile and desirable in life." To this end, theory is more important than practice. "Mere book learning is not of any great use. After Realisation all intellectual loads are useless burdens and are to be thrown overboard." They only detract from spiritual effort. The most important thing for him was Self-Enquiry, although he was prepared to admit the usefulness of disciplines such as devotion, breath control and good deeds for differing individuals.

The conversations cover many subjects, such as death and rebirth, the nature of man, suffering and life in the world. On all of them the Sage speaks with wisdom and considerable humanity. Some of the dialogues have a humour all their own:

DEVOTEE: I have a toothache. Is that only a thought?

BHAGAVAN: Yes.

DEVOTEE: Then why can't I think there is no toothache and so cure myself?

BHAGAVAN: One does not feel the toothache when one is absorbed in other thoughts or when asleep.

DEVOTEE: But it still remains.

BHAGAVAN: So strong is man's conviction of the reality of the world that it is not easily shaken off. But the world is no more real than the individual who sees it.

Readers who dig deep will find many rewards in Mr. Osborne's loving and skilful compilation.

M. K. W.

A primitive village in northern Iraq, the region of the Kurdish revolt against General Kassem's authority

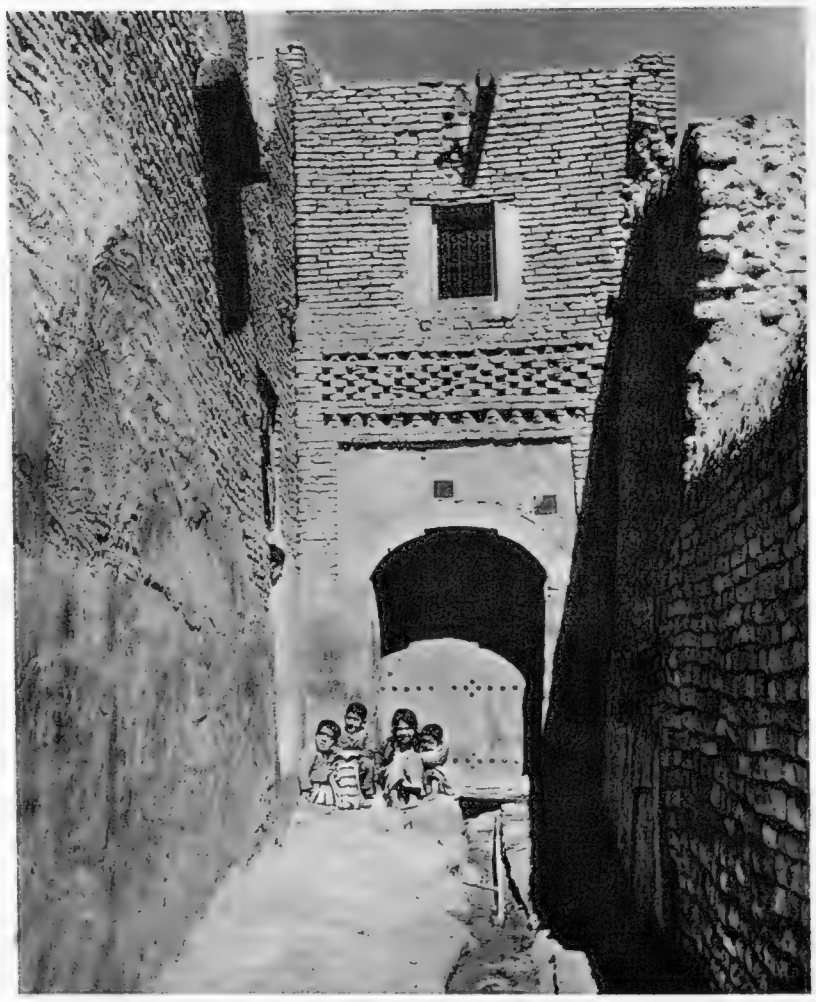
Iraqi youths lounge in the sun as they sit in one of Bagdad's

OIL-RICH IRAQ

Today the modern Republican State of Iraq appears as yet another layer of civilisation superimposed on the top of the strata of history which formed the ancient land of Mesopotamia. For Iraq is the land of the two rivers, the Euphrates and Tigris, of Ur of the Chaldees and of Babylon. Now it has grown rich from oil—nearly £100,000,000 worth of oil revenue a year. (In 1960, oil accounted for over 60 per cent of Iraq's budgetary income.) Following this affluence there came a Republican form of government led by General Kassem as Prime Minister, and five-year development programmes of public works—dams, irrigation projects, roads and bridges, schools and hospitals, and industrial developments. A number of British, American, German, Pakistani and Danish companies have a stake in Iraq's economy. Britain's exports during last year to Iraq totalled about £52,000,000.

But it is not as a State developing a modern, progressive structure on its ancient foundations that Iraq has been so much in the news. This has come through the political struggles of its leader, General Kassem, who came to power after the assassination of King Faisal II, other members of the Royal Family, and the then Prime Minister, Nuri es-Said, in 1958. The political situation is, and has been, complex in Iraq. General Kassem has gone through periods of popularity and has survived at least one assassination attempt.

(*Continued on page 148*)



A street scene in Erbil, reckoned to be one of the oldest inhabited cities in the world

An armed guard at the entrance to
Below: In a contrasting style i

e, modern streets

The new Parliament buildings in Bagdad have been under construction for some years

British Embassy, Bagdad.
new Russian Embassy

The domes and minaret of a mosque contrast with the busy scene at a bus terminal in Bagdad

Women use an open-air water-tap outside a textile factory in Mosul

OIL-RICH IRAQ

(*Continued from page 146*)

His rule has been facing three concurrent problems—the Kurdish revolt; his dispute with the Iraq Petroleum Company; and his attempt to annex Kuwait. Since the middle of 1961, the impoverished northern areas of Iraq, bordered by Syria, Turkey and Iran, have been the scene of sporadic but bitter fighting between Kurdish tribes and Iraqi troops. The Kurds, led by Mulla Mustafa, are fighting zealously for their long-cherished separatist State of Kurdistan. At the beginning of this year, General Kassem admitted he had been unable to subjugate them.

At the other end of the long length of the Tigris and Euphrates is the oil sheikhdom of Kuwait, to which General Kassem, brandishing many an ancient map, has laid claim. British support for the Sheikh of Kuwait and the intervention of the Arab League kept the Iraqi forces out of Kuwait.

But it is oil which is the cornerstone of all politics in Iraq. General Kassem, during January, was applying strong pressure to the Iraq Petroleum Company: he cancelled 99.5 per cent of the Company's concessionary area; demanded 20 per cent of stockholdings, and an adjustment of the 50-50 profit-sharing ratio. In response, I.P.C. proposed that the matter should go to arbitration. If General Kassem controlled Kuwait's oil, he would be in a much stronger position to enforce his demands on I.P.C.

An Iraqi farmer

A workman pulls a primitive roller to flatten the earthen roof of a building in northern Iraq

Mr. A. J. Perks (seated), general manager, Iraq Petroleum Company's oilfield at Kirkup, and Mr. W. W. Stewart

At work in the Government sugar factory at Mosul

A peasant fills his water-cans from a pump at Kirkup

The complex installations of an oilfield—in this case, the Ira P

Installations of the Dokan Dam in northern Iraq. In the centre background can be seen the lake formed behind the dam

etroleum Company's installations at Kirkup. **Right:** Iraqi and German technicians constructing a tunnel on the new road between Derbendi-Khan and Suleimeniya

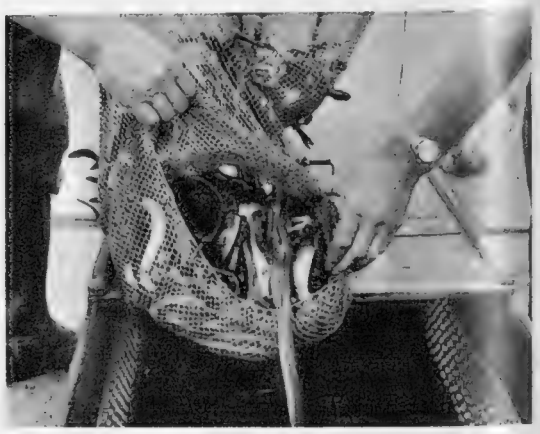
BRIAN VESEY-FITZGERALD

EELS OUT OF FASHION

" First, wash him in water and salt; then pull off his skin below his vent or navel, and not much further; having done that, take out his guts as clean as you can, but wash him not: then give him three or four scotches with a knife; and then put into his belly and those scotches, sweet herbs, an anchovy, and a little nutmeg grated or cut very small, and your herbs and anchovies must also be cut very small; and mixt with good butter and salt: having done this, then pull his skin over him, all but his head, which you are to cut off, to the end you may tie his skin about that part where his head grew, and it must be so tied as to keep all his moisture within his skin: and having done this, tie him with tape or jack-thread to a spit, and roast him leisurely; and baste him with water and salt until his skin breaks, and then with butter; and having roasted him enough, let what was put into his belly, and what he drips, be his sauce."

they cannot sell. The simple truth is that today the eel is considered to be " not quite " in the best circles.

It was not always so. The eel is one of the very few fish to boast its own vocabulary. You do not, for example, carve an eel: you *transon* it. The fish could not possibly have acquired its own vocabulary of terms had it not once been popular in the most highly educated circles. And you have but to study Mrs. Beeton to realise that in her day the eel was regarded favourably in the best houses. Mrs. Beeton gives recipes for eel soup, eel broth, which she also considered to be especially suitable for invalids, collared eel, boiled eel, stewed eel, fried eel, eel pie, eel *à la matelote*, eel *à la tartare*, and jellied eel. Oddly enough, she does not mention baked eel—though she does give a recipe for baked conger eel—nor eel in batter, which was a favourite in Wales in my boyhood, and she



An eel fisherman lifts a net full of eels on Romney Marsh. **Right:** The eels are moved to a perforated box for storage

If you know your *Compleat Angler* you will not need to be reminded that that is Izaak Walton describing " how to make an Eel a most excellent Dish of Meat." And the eel (not necessarily cooked like that) is a most excellent dish that is now sadly out of fashion. How often nowadays do you see eels swimming in a tank at the fishmonger's? In some of the less fashionable districts of London perhaps, along Severnside or in some of the great industrial towns, but then not in the " smart " shops.

In the south of England, at any rate, it is seen very rarely. It is a long while since I have seen eels in the fishmongers' shops of the town near which I live; so long ago that I am not certain that I have seen them. This has, for a long time, been a " pension and dividend " town—the sort of place, you would think, since it is both good and cheap, in which the eel would have a ready sale—and more recently has become a " managerial commuter " town as well. The local fishmongers know what evidently did not know *The Compleat Angler*, for there is no mention of roast eel. But it is, all the same, a fairly formidable list. Eels were evidently eaten regularly in her day; and in the best circles.

Why not today? Ridiculous though it may seem, I think that one reason may be that the eel does not look very fish-like. I have heard one young woman declare that it is altogether too like a snake to be eatable. Perhaps it is because jellied eels are still sold where great crowds gather for some sporting occasion, but not the sort of sporting occasion that demands a top hat! I think there may be something in that theory.

You will sometimes see cockles and winkles on sale in a public bar but never in the lounge bar. I fancy that in Mrs. Beeton's day the best houses had cooks, fully trained and efficient. The work was done behind the scenes. The eel was not seen until it arrived, prepared, at the table. The eel is not an easy fish to deal with, and the average housewife (who today, even in the best circles, is likely enough to be cook as well) just cannot cope.

Old Izaak says, simply, " pull off his skin." Mrs. Beeton, time and time again, says, " remove the skin." She does not tell you how to do this. Have you ever tried to skin an eel? Put him on a board in the kitchen and, dead though he is, he will slip about all over the place: you are much more likely to skin yourself. Let me tell you the easiest way. Nail him up, a nail through his head, on the back-door, an outhouse door, the garage door. He will hang like a dead stoat on a gamekeeper's gibbet. Take a really sharp knife and make a circular incision just below the pectoral fin. Take a dry cloth and hold the severed edges of the skin and pull. You will find that the skin peels off as easily as a stocking.

If you cannot buy eels at your local fishmonger's, you can always try catching your own. It is very simple and no one will object to your catching eels. All you have to do is to break an egg (hen or duck, it does not matter so long as it is fresh) and throw it into the water. This is a dodge that has been used by countrymen since time immemorial. All the eels in the water, and there are very few waters without eels, will soon collect at the spot, and you can then catch them easily enough with worms. When you have your eel on the bank, hit it on the *tail* with a stone to stun it and then sever the spinal column just below the head with a knife.

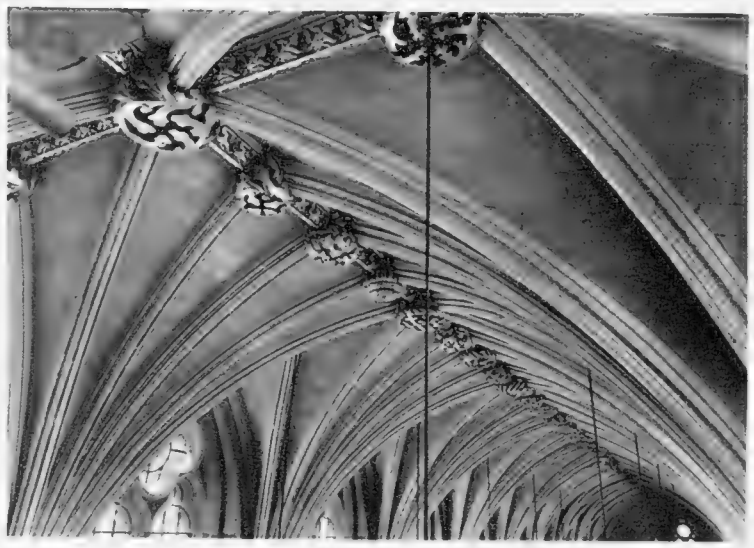
There used to exist a dining club in London which was formed solely in honour of the eel, and no doubt the chef at that club knew endless ways of preparing eel for the delight of the members. Personally, I think that there is no fish dish in the world to equal stewed eels and big mealy boiled potatoes served up with a pint of Guinness. If, for your next dinner party, you would like something more fancy, may I suggest this:

Take a couple of eels. Skin, remove head, tail and entrails (being careful to remove also the clot of blood that the eel wears in his innards). Cut the fish into transverse sections of about 3 ins. each. Steam to softness and, when the flesh falls easily away from the spinal column, place in a casserole containing a smooth hot sauce of white Rhine wine, flour and fennel. And serve at once.

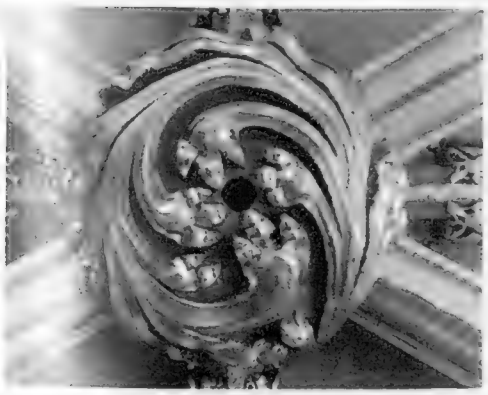
And what to drink with that? A full-bodied claret. I fear that that may shock gastronomic experts. I feel sure it is in the worst of bad taste, but the taste is good. I hope that you will try it sometime.

RESTORATION IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

Photographs by A. F. Kersting



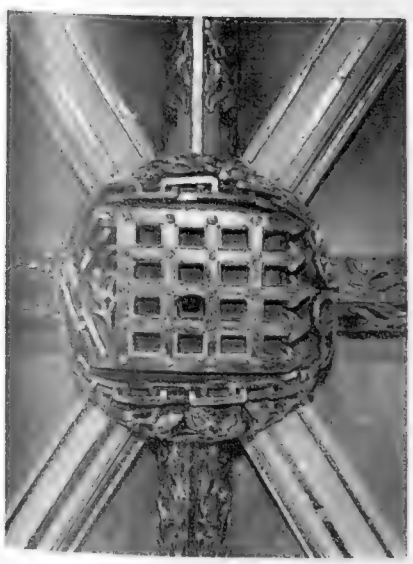
The restoration of any church is liable to be a long job, and Westminster Abbey is no exception. Work on the present extensive repairs and cleaning operation on the interior and exterior fabric of the Abbey has been going on since soon after the Coronation in 1953. Work on the interior is hoped to be completed in 1965, which will be the year of celebrations to commemorate the 900th anniversary of the original founding of the Abbey by Edward the Confessor. The first task of restoration had to be urgent repairs. These have largely been completed and work has now progressed to include other operations. Tombs are being cleaned and painted and bosses in the nave roof gilded. Appeals have been made to individual families, where this has been possible, for assistance with the cost of restoring tombs, so that the Appeal Fund money can go to the fabric of the Abbey

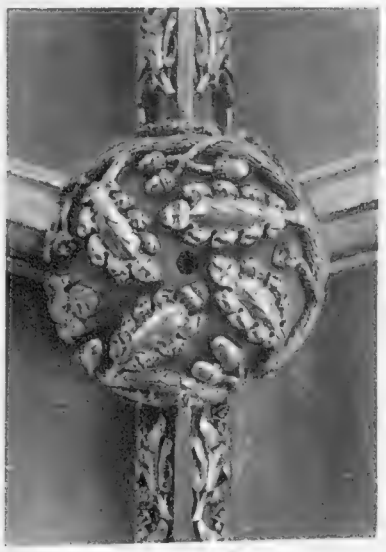


The effigy of the Countess of Sussex in the Chapel of St. Paul has been cleaned and restored

Right: The Nave Screen, originally designed by Hawksmoor, but given a new façade in 1828, has also been restored. The monument (right) is that of Lord Stanhope

The three pictures are of bosses in the Nave roof, showing leaf and acorn designs and a portcullis, which have recently been gilded





TRAVEL

HOLIDAYS IN EUROPE

The second of two articles on places to visit on the Continent

By **GORDON COOPER**

Last week's article contained suggestions for holidays in Northern Europe. I move now farther south, starting with:

France. Each time that I visit this enchanting country, with its diverse tourist attractions, I find that prices keep on increasing. I hope myself to go on a motoring tour there, and will certainly take a current copy of the *Guide des Relais Routiers* (15s., and available in most bookshops), for it lists 4,500 comfortable little hotels and inns where simple bedrooms cost only 10s. a night and good and ample three-course meals, with a bottle of wine, cost only 7s. 6d. It is usually not necessary even to book in advance. Of course, for the more affluent, there is the unique Michelin Guide. Self-drive cars in France can be arranged in Britain, and there is also Lane's (251, Brompton Road, S.W.3) who provide a fly-and-self-drive holiday from Nice at inclusive prices. A second suggestion for a family holiday is Sables-d'or-les-Pins, easily reached from St. Malo, with a glorious beach and simple pleasures. The Hotel Diane can be strongly recommended.

Spain. This ever-popular holiday country has so many resorts from which to choose. As a contrast to the rather Anglicised Costa Brava, I suggest Sitges, a pleasant seaside resort, not far from Barcelona and with coach links from its airport. Miles of sandy beach, quaint little streets, gay cafés, and charming night-clubs where you can watch the typical dancing and join in convivial song are among the attractions. Spanish Tourist Service (93, Piccadilly, W.1) offer an inclusive tour to this resort, including air travel, at reasonable cost.

Portugal. The northern coast of Portugal offers three pleasing sunshine resorts beside the sea: Ofir, Esposende and Viana do Castelo. From all three places excursions can be made to various interesting towns and villages, particularly on days of *festas*, when you will be able to watch local celebrations. There are good bathing beaches and excellent hotels. Horizon Holidays (17, Hanover Street, W.1) feature recommended holidays, with air travel between Southend and Oporto.

Italy. There is surely no more delightful area in Europe than around the Bay of Naples. Ramblers Association Services (48, Park Road, N.W.1) have arranged a round trip to the sunny islands of Ischia, Capri and Ponza, allowing ample time to laze in these paradisal spots. Erna Low (47, Old Brompton Road, S.W.7), too, offers a holiday on the still unspoilt island of Ponza, in a delightful setting, where you are away from the crowds. A visit to Ponza, by the way, can easily be combined with visits to Rome and Naples. Erna Low has also a House Party at Laigueglia which has a splendid beach and is not far from Alassio on the Italian Riviera.

Italy—A narrow sunlit street in Capri

Gibraltar. This outpost of Britain is an excellent base from which to make excursions into Andalusia and to Morocco. From June 30 to July 13 there is a Festival of the Sea and Arts. The events include regattas, a sea angling contest, underwater fishing, speed-boat and swimming competitions. Worth noting, too, is the pleasure of local shopping, with duty-free prices for the various pleasant " extras " of life.

Tangier. A wonderful beach, excellent hotels, and easily reached by air (via Gibraltar or direct) from Britain. There are fascinating excursions, too, available into the interior of this country which is quite different in its appeal to the mainland of the Continent. Travel arrangements could be made through Horizon Holidays (17, Hanover Street, W.1).

Malta. This " Island of the Sun " is making strenuous efforts to develop its tourist industry. Valletta, the capital, with its many fine buildings, is a living monument to the Knights of St. John, while nearby Sliema has a fine promenade and rocky beach. There are also many fine sandy beaches on the island, which can be easily reached, while those with archæological interests will enjoy seeing the various prehistoric temples and caves. There is no language or currency problems as English-speaking Malta is in the sterling area. Swans Tours (260, Tottenham Court Road, W.1) offer inclusive holidays (travelling by air) at very moderate cost.

Yugoslavia. The Dalmatian coast is the most popular part of this country, and while Dubrovnik must always be the favourite goal for those who wish to escape from the beaten track, I can strongly commend Budvah,

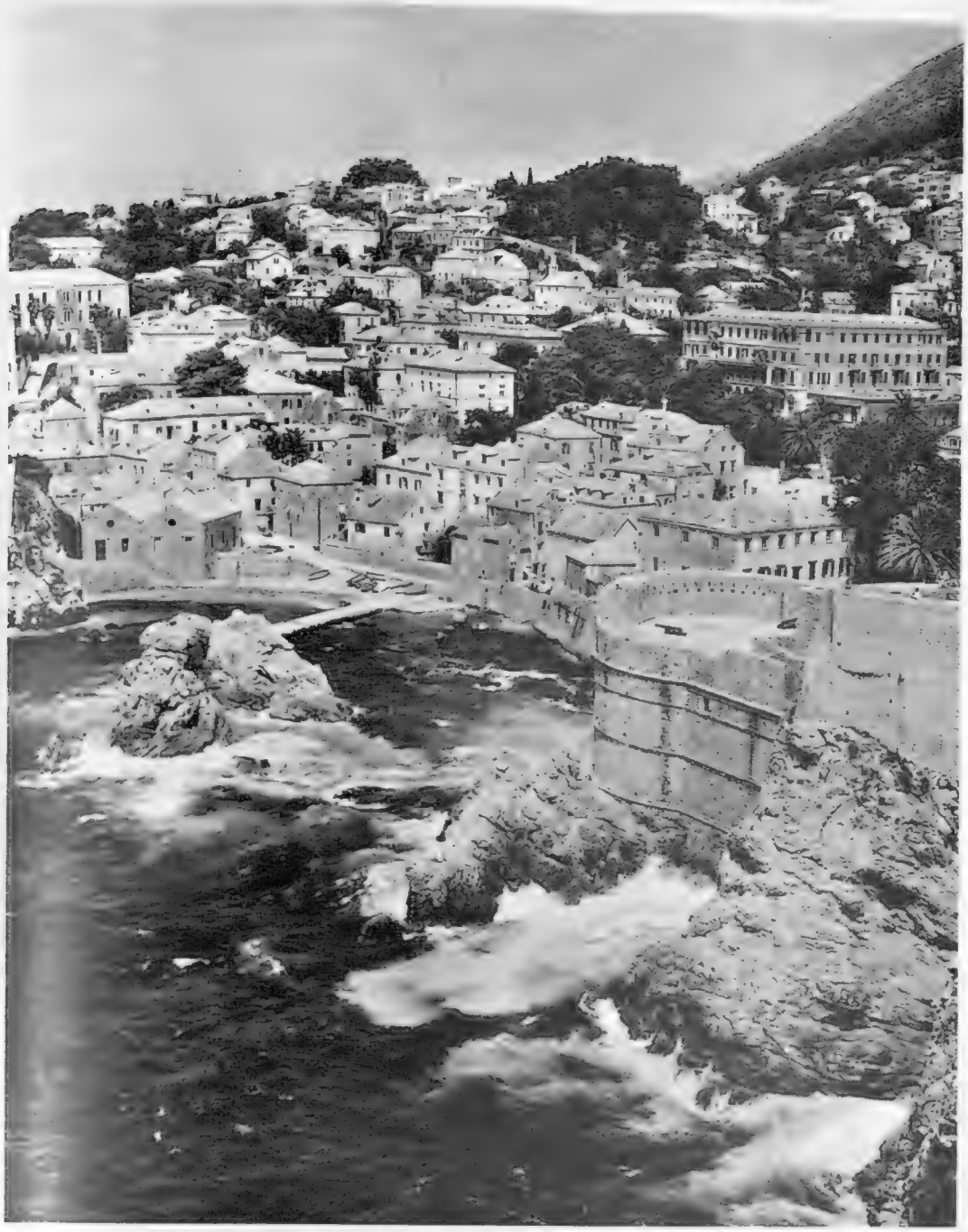
Greece—A view of the circular temple at Delphi

with its Hotel Avala built outside the walls of an enchanting old town. Nearby Milocer —the Hotel Milocer was a former royal palace —and Sveti Stefan, a tiny island converted into a luxury hotel, are both delightful. Lunn's (36, Edgware Road, W.1) and Hickie Borman (24, Charles II Street, S.W.1) are recommended travel agents for Yugoslavia.

Greece. Here are combined the pleasures of sunshine and plenty of remarkable ancient sites. The best way to see the mainland is by an organised coach tour, otherwise you may have trouble in getting accommodation. Alternatively, island-lovers will relish a round voyage, with calls at various islands. It is also possible to combine such a cruise with visits to some Turkish ports. Oceanways (23, Haymarket, S.W.1) is a recommended travel agent for all Greek holidays. They can tell you, too, about Greek villa parties and holiday villages. Incidentally, the ferry-boat service between Brindisi and Igoumenitsa will interest those who would like to take their own cars to Greece.

Austria. Less sophisticated than the more popular Woerthersee resorts is Millstatt on Lake Millstatt. It is more of a family resort, but it is still a gay and lively spot and opportunities are available for various watersports. Ingham's (26, Old Bond Street, W.1) is a specialist travel agent for this country, as well as for Millstatt. From this resort several interesting excursions can be made through the lovely Carinthian countryside.

Switzerland. A second look at this old favourite, where tourists are so well looked after. One of my favourite mountain resorts is Schuls-Tarasp-Vulpera in the enchanting Engadine valley; another suggestion is a very leisurely and beautiful coach tour offered by Lammin Tours (67, Blenheim Terrace, N.W.8) which embraces Zermatt (and the Matterhorn), Locarno, Arosa, Pontresina, and Lenzerheide. With stays at each resort, you will surely feel true recuperation in the exhilarating mountain air and in viewing such magnificent scenery.



Yugoslavia—Port Bokar, lying outside the walls of Dubrovnik

Spain—The beach at the pleasant resort of Sitges

GORDON COOPER'S HOTEL "OSCARS" FOR 1961

This is the fourth occasion on which I am presenting *The Sphere* awards to those hotels visited during the past twelve months and which fully satisfied me with their standards of comfort, food, service and atmosphere. My selections are not necessarily linked with luxury hotels, for often I have found a modest inn or pension has measured up to my personal tastes and delight.

From some eighty hotels at which I have stayed I give my premier awards to the Tregenna Castle Hotel, St. Ives, and to the Hostal de la Gavina, S'Agaro (Costa Brava). The Cornish hotel is operated by the Hotels Executive of the British Transport Commission. It stands in a lovely position, possesses many amenities, and provides excellent food, good service and every kind of desirable comfort. (Another Cornish hotel which pleased me was the Red Lion in Truro. It is a typical old-fashioned English inn, offering comfort and wonderful food.)

The Hostal de la Gavina is, in my opinion, the finest resort hotel on the Continent. Owned by a wealthy Catalonian who is a cultured art collector, every room is a miniature museum, while the outlook over the sea is fascinating. Everything (including a cheerful service) is just right, and there are good bathing beaches and a charming maritime promenade. No wonder the Chancellor of the Exchequer delights to escape to this spot for a holiday.

My other awards go to:

Ireland: Despite another recommendation, a generally delightful hotel at Greystones (Co. Wicklow) fails to be my selection, for I don't like paper table-napkins (or Lilliputian baths) in a first-class hotel. My choice, therefore, falls on the more modest Casey's Hotel, Glengarriff—one of the loveliest spots on earth—where I was most content. I enjoyed a delicious "Irish stew."

Austria. The Post Hotel in Lienz (East Tirol) has been owned by the same family for 900 years, and it is second to none in the country for its *Gemütlichkeit* atmosphere, as well as offering a good base from which to explore the picturesque valleys of this little-known corner of Austria.

Bermuda: The Sherwood Manor would certainly be my first choice when I next visit this most delightful colony.

Cyprus: Lying beside the sea, the Dome Hotel, Kyrenia, is a perfect spot for a lazing holiday, although there is much of interest to see on this island.

Finland: The Helsinki Hotel, Helsinki, is decorated in typical modern Finnish style; its management understands the wishes of foreign guests; and it offers one of the best sauna baths in the capital.

Germany: The Haus am Wald, Winterberg (Sauerland), is a modest pension, but its friendly hospitality and comfort warmed my heart.

Italy: For many years now, on my visits to Rome, I have never failed to stay at the most comfortable and satisfying Hotel Majestic, conveniently situated on the Via Vittorio Veneto. I could not wish for a better place to stay in Rome.

Norway: An article on the Telemark will shortly be appearing in these pages. In the meantime, I wish to give full marks to the Bolkesjö Hotel, Bolkesjö, which is in typical Norwegian style and lies amid sublime scenery.

Switzerland: The Hotel zum Störchen, Zurich, lies beside the Limmat and is a first-class establishment. It is delightful, too, to breakfast on its verandah, throwing an occasional crust to the waiting swans below. The Quellenhof Hotel, Bad Ragaz, is another Swiss hotel, situated in a lovely park, which I can strongly recommend.

Any reader who would like a list of previous Hotel "Oscars" can obtain it by sending a stamped, addressed envelope to *The Sphere*, 13-15, John Adam Street, London, W.C.2.

BOOKS

THE SHAVIAN SPIRIT

Sir Cedric Hardwicke's memoirs and two volumes of Shaw's miscellaneous writings; and this week's fiction

This week starts with a very strong Shavian flavour as far as books are concerned, and with a unanimity of praise that would have delighted the sage of Ayot St. Lawrence, or so it is permissible to think. First of all, there is the autobiography of Sir Cedric Hardwicke, as told to Mr. James Brough, and described as irreverent memoirs. A VICTORIAN IN ORBIT (Methuen. 25s.) may be so categorised and may also be called lively, amusing, meaty and sensible, especially where it touches on the actor's craft. But irreverence is banned from any mention of the late George Bernard Shaw, who once said to Sir Cedric: "You are my fifth favourite actor, the first four being the Marx Brothers." This book is essentially the story of a man's career and, apart from some early and engaging details of home life, deals with his life in the theatre and, later, in the movie studio. There are countless anecdotes, most of them so good that it is a temptation to fill the page with them, and all told in an admirably succinct style as with George Robey's invariable and cryptic entry in the visitors' books of theatrical digs: "Quoth the raven," the great man would write, and leave his landladies impressed, if mystified. I enjoyed the book thoroughly and am grateful both to Sir Cedric and Mr. Brough, not least for the appended *Handbook for Interviewers*, in which Sir Cedric would answer the familiar question of "What is an actor's greatest asset?" with the two simple words: "An audience."

PLATFORM AND PULPIT (Hart-Davis. 30s.) is a further volume in the series of Shaw's hitherto uncollected works, edited by Mr. Dan H. Laurence. The present book consists of the full texts of more than thirty of Shaw's formal lectures, extemporare speeches and debates, covering the period from 1885 to 1946, and dealing with such favourite subjects as sexual reform, education, Fabian socialism, vivisection, drama, religion and Soviet Communism. In fact, he deserted the platform for the microphone about 1933 saying, typically, that it was foolish to talk to a few hundreds when you could talk to millions. Among his wireless talks is one broadcast to the United States in 1931 and entitled: "*Look You Boob!*"—*A Little Talk on America*, and there is a splendid debate on socialism between Shaw and G. K. Chesterton, among many other treasures for the Shavian admirer.

SHAW ON SHAKESPEARE (Cassell. 30s.) will be, to many of us, an even more attractive proposition, since it contains most of the significant things which Shaw wrote about Shakespeare, whether in his dramatic criticisms, or in letters to Ellen Terry and Mrs. Pat Campbell; in a sketch, *Shakes versus Shav* or in the new last act to *Cymbeline* which he suggested that theatre managers might care to use since audiences would not know the difference. Many of his observations are memorable, as when he said that *King Lear* was pure tragedy, "for even the fool in *Lear* is tragic." Or as when he wrote to Mrs. Pat: "If you want to know the truth about Lady Macbeth's character, she hasn't one. There never was no such person." Or wrote, in his

GORDON CRAIG, photographed at his home in Vence by Allan Chappelow, last week celebrated his ninetieth birthday. The son of Ellen Terry, he had great influence in the theatre. **Right:** At a party in his honour at the Mermaid Theatre, London, guests listen through a telephone amplifier to his voice. Foreground are Edward Gordon Craig, his son and Helen Craig, his grand-daughter. Behind are Bernard Miles, Dulcie Gray, Peter Sellers and Ursula Jeans

REMARKABLE MEN

The first biography of Dag Hammarskjold and Albert Luthuli's autobiography

While the death of Dag Hammarskjold, the Swedish Secretary-General of the United Nations, is still so close, it is perhaps too early to assess his contribution to world politics and the policies of world peace. His was a fascinating and extraordinary complex character; and again one not easy to assess; but Joseph Lash, a leading editorial writer for the *New York Post* and for many years an observer at U.N., has made a bold attempt to let us see this faithful practitioner in quiet diplomacy in his book DAG HAMMARSKJOLD (Cassell. 21s.). This is an able piece of work, which reveals a statesman with a razor sharp mind, unflagging intellectual energy, and a physical constitution to match—above all, a man with an innate sense of fairness. What is important about this first try at a biography of a notable public servant is that it does not attempt too much. The author writes from personal observation and experience; he does not try to round off the picture, and indeed how could he? Perhaps the dichotomy in Hammarskjold's life lay in his deep affection for the lakes and woodlands of his native Sweden, and in his world sense; the one giving him a homely quality, the other, it seems, a devastating impersonality. Perhaps for the moment we must leave it at that.

From one remarkable man let us pass to another; to Albert Luthuli, the South African leader recently awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. He is the son of a Zulu chief and in 1952 he became President of the African National Congress until it was banned in 1960 after Sharpeville. LET MY PEOPLE GO (Collins. 25s.) is Mr. Luthuli's autobiography; it reflects the spirit of a man who wishes to see the building of a new land, a home for men who are black, white, and brown, from the ruins of the old narrow groups, not least of Dutch nationalism. This is a deeply stirring story. It is clear that Mr. Luthuli has no thought that the new Africa can be built overnight. He is not that kind of man. But he does believe that, given the goodwill, we could at least begin to build it. His Christian viewpoint shines through all these pages.

Many people were summarily bundled into prison in South Africa during the "state of emergency" in the Spring of 1960, and one of the whites who so suffered was Myrna Blumberg, Cape Town correspondent of a British newspaper. What befell her she describes in a brief but moving document entitled WHITE MADAM (Victor Gollancz. 18s.). Miss Blumberg was arrested one morning "with the utmost urbanity, no fuss, no bother and no reasons for the arrest." Her mental sufferings and anguish are plain to see and we are made to see them against the "granite wall" of *apartheid* policy. This is the kind of political book that requires an answer; if there is any real answer.

Sir Harry Luke's ISLANDS OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC (Harrap. 25s.) is a fascinating blend of historical narrative with a word picture of this vast ocean territory stretching from Hawaii to New Zealand and from Easter Island and the Pitcairns to New Guinea. Sir Harry's personal experiences as High Commissioner for the Western Pacific and his own travels over a span of fifty-five years give great authority to the whole work.

Jan de Hartog, always deft in conjuring up the passing scene, has written a delightful account of his voyaging in a venerable sailboat along the coasts of Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, through the bayous of Louisiana to New Orleans, through the mysterious Everglades and, farther north, the creeks and lagoons of New Jersey and the Delaware. WATERS OF THE NEW WORLD (Hamish Hamilton. 21s.) is only in one sense a mariner's log. It is also a sensitive, often poetic, chronicle of a journey among America's varied coastal people. It may be felt that these vignettes are all too brief, but the quality of the writing is undoubted.

The late André Bonnard, the great Swiss Hellenist, lived just long enough to complete the third and concluding volume of his comprehensive study of Greek civilisation. This covers the age of decline, the fourth and third centuries B.C., witnessing the death of the city states which were the social framework of the classical age. GREEK CIVILISATION FROM EURIPIDES TO ALEXANDRIA (Allen and Unwin. 35s.) is profusely illustrated, and the handling of the whole vast theme is as one would expect masterly.

Richard Edmonds

first Shakespearean review in 1886: "I shall say nothing of the feminine parts, except that they were all unfortunately cast." Or said, of a well-known actress playing Rosalind, that "the effect is like a canary trying to sing Handel." Wit, prejudice, acuity and a formidably thorough knowledge of the plays: all these are part of Shaw's critical approach to Shakespeare's work. His reviews must have made wonderful reading when they were fresh from his pen. It is a small miracle that they remain so vivid and so controversial.

It is seven years—a very long span indeed in a novelist's life—since Mr. Nigel Balchin has produced a novel, and readers with pleasurably sensational memories of such books of his as *The Small Back Room* will naturally be sitting up in happy anticipation. Some of them, I 'm afraid, will soon be sitting back again. For SEEN DIMLY BEFORE DAWN (Collins. 16s.), although often tender, once or twice quite touching in theme and invariably smooth and elegant in style, has neither the power nor the brilliantly incisive manner of his earliest works. This is the story, which I can well see is going to please a great number of people in spite of these strictures, of an adolescent boy who spends some weeks of a summer holiday with his uncle and the attractive young woman with whom that uncle is living. The boy, who is also the narrator, falls in love with her, even dreams of marriage to her, and is brutally disillusioned on the last morning of his stay. There is enough of Mr. Balchin's magic in the telling to make the book exceptionally readable, but this is not a book to enhance his reputation.

HEY, DELANEY ! (Heinemann. 16s.) is not about remote Welsh hills or poaching, or tinkers or tigers, but it is, nevertheless, by Mr. Ian Niall and, although the entire story is set in the drabbest part of a big city, retains his very individual touch and his effectively plain way of conveying the loneliness of a man in an alien community. The man in question is an unremarkable, middle-aged ex-soldier who works as an insurance salesman, lives in lodgings and, for his own pleasure, plays the piano in a local pub on Saturday nights. "Hey, Delaney !" they call. "Come an' knock out a tune on the old Johannah," and he does, accepting perhaps a pint or two of beer and enjoying himself. He has never married and his best friend, a comrade in arms, has died. But from a state of complete loneliness he gradually becomes involved in the lives around him, sometimes dangerously and sometimes dispassionately, but, little by little, being absorbed into a very human world. The plot is simple; the development of a character infinitely subtle and this must rate as one of Mr. Niall's most haunting works.

The next two novels, one English and one American, are about violence in various terms and both are set in surroundings of remarkable squalor. HELL AND HIGH WATER (W. H. Allen. 15s.), by Mr. Rodney Garland, deals with the life (if that is the correct term) of a group of people in a Soho drinking club and has a curiously convincing quality. THE SHAME OF OUR WOUNDS (Hutchinson. 16s.) is a compassionately told but horrifying story of two boys who escape from a New York reformatory and wander the back streets and the alleys until they are betrayed and returned for cruel punishment. Mr. Arthur Roth uses a staccato style and extremely forthright language, both of which seem appropriate to the subject.

FACES IN THE WATER (W. H. Allen. 15s.) is by the New Zealand writer, Miss Janet Frame, and is a chronicle, told in the documentary manner and in the first person, of a young woman's life as a patient in a mental hospital. It is a terrible record and only the thinnest comfort to persuade oneself that it is, as the author points out, fiction.

Vernon Fane

MacNamara (James Cagney) and Fritz (Karl Lieffen) support Otto (Horst Buchholz) after getting him released from the East German police

ONE, TWO, THREE

at the Odeon, Marble Arch, from February 8

With films like *Some Like it Hot* and *The Apartment*, Billy Wilder produced some of the funniest films to come out of Hollywood in recent years. His latest to reach London, described in the American Press as "non-stop nuttiness," is a satire on East-West relations in Berlin, conducted at a crackling pace. The plot is too complicated to compress. It basically concerns the attempts of MacNamara to sell Coca-Cola to Russia and to stop his boss's daughter, Scarlett, from marrying an East German Communist named Otto.

At an hotel in East Berlin, Ingeborg (Lilo Pulver) dances on the table, cheered by the Russian trade commissioners. **Left:** Scarlett (Pamela Tiffin)

LEADERS OF BRITISH INDUSTRY

Photographed by Tom Hustler

P. M. Holman

As chairman of Holman Bros. Ltd., of Camborne, Cornwall, Mr. Holman is head of a public company which holds a leading position in the manufacture of mining and pneumatic plant. He is also a director of certain other subsidiary companies in the Holman Group, on behalf of which he has flown more than 1,000,000 miles. Now aged sixty-six, Percy Mynors Holman, O.B.E., was educated at Blundell's School and the Institute Minerva in Zurich. He was apprenticed at Holmans and at Maschininfabrik Oerlikon of Switzerland. From 1914 to 1919 he served in the Royal Field Artillery, including periods as an instructor at R.F.A. Cadet Schools. A keen sportsman, Mr. Holman has given life-long service to Rugby football. He started his career at Blundell's, played for Camborne for a number of years and was capped for Cornwall in 1920. In 1924, he became secretary of Cornwall R.F.U., and three years later its representative to the Rugby Football Union. By 1947, Mr. Holman was serving on the R.F.U.'s Finance and Emergency Committee, and in 1952 he achieved the honour of becoming its president. His services to sport have not been restricted to rugby. A long-serving member of the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club, he has been its Commodore since 1954. He is also a member of the Royal Yacht Squadron. Mr. Holman has been a keen flyer, gaining his pilot "A" certificate in 1931. His public services have been in different fields. They have included being president of the Camborne Show Society; Assistant County Commandant, Cornwall County Special Constabulary; chairman of the South-Western Regional Board for Industry; vice-president of the Engineering Employers' West of England Association; and governor of his old school, Blundell's. Married, with two children, Mr. Holman lives near Falmouth, in Cornwall

TANKERS GO ON GROWING

By "THE SPHERE" INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

When British Petroleum recently ordered two 100,000-ton tankers, the first ever to be built in shipyards in this country, it did so without making any significant addition at all to the tonnage that it had on order: each contract replaced orders for two tankers of about half the tonnage. Entirely new tanker orders are no longer quite as few and far between as they were, say, eighteen months ago. Tonnage has to be built to take care of the increase in ocean movement of oil that follows from a steady increase in world oil consumption. Though the forecasts about the rate of increase are not as optimistic as they were three or four years ago, every 1 per cent. more oil consumed in the world means something over 10,000,000 tons more to be transported from well to market.

Very gradually, therefore, the extreme surplus of tanker tonnage that developed at the end of the '50's may now be beginning to show signs of righting itself. This is some years off: but oil tankers have still to be ordered some years ahead. The building times are coming down, in Britain as elsewhere, and the length of accumulated order-books which sets the period which has to elapse before a yard can get around to your order has steadily been whittled away. But the tanker departments of major oil companies, who order about a third of the world's tankers and are responsible for the building of most of the rest, work to programmes well in advance.

These departments' judgments of the future condition of the market will partly determine how many of the ships that they reckon they will need some years from now they build themselves and how many they leave to independent tanker operators to provide. At a time when the levels of freight rates are very depressed, and when the profits of oil companies are not fat enough to make the "self-financing" of their many investment commitments out of profits as easy as it used to be, the companies will obviously lean towards chartering as much tonnage as possible, thus not tying up their own money. The proportion of the world tanker fleet owned by the big companies has been coming down somewhat in recent years, though the great bulk of it is still working on these companies' account to move their oil.

But apart from the predicted expansion of demand for oil and its ocean movement, there are the normal demands arising from replacement and obsolescence in a world tanker fleet of about 67,000,000 tons carrying capacity. Obsolescence, as the BP orders illustrate, is an important factor in this business. Few items of industrial equipment have developed faster in the last ten to twenty years than specialised ships for carrying bulk loads, with the oil tanker well in the lead of this technical advance. BP's 100,000-ton vessels will cost significantly less than the same carrying capacity in the two vessels that each will replace; and because such ships, operated efficiently, need less terminal time, while operating at comparable speeds, their operating costs may well turn out 20 to 25 per cent. lower than those of moving the same annual tonnages in the smaller vessels.

The word "supertanker" has been with us for about fifteen years now; almost every year the definition has had to be moved up rapidly to keep up with the reality. Ten years ago it meant a vessel of, say, 30,000 to 35,000 tons; even today, two-thirds of the existing world fleet consists of ships smaller than that. Today BP's 100,000-tonners would certainly qualify; there are still only five of these in service in the world. But one Japanese oil-importing company has placed firm orders for two 130,000-ton tankers; and it is talking about ordering a 160,000-tonner.

The immediate economies in building costs for these huge vessels are said to level out at about 80,000 tons or so; heavier construction begins to be required, and at some point the designer may have to provide for twin-screw propulsion, though far larger amounts of horse-power are now being put through a single screw to drive much bigger ships than was considered possible only a few years ago. But the fairly high operating speeds still available, the economies in crew costs and berthing-time, and the immense volumes of oil these vessels can deliver in one trip offer further savings in their operating costs well beyond that limit.

Japan, in recent years, has had a faster growth in oil demand than any other industrialised country in the world; it is rapidly becoming a massive factor in the world oil market. Most of its supplies are bought by independent Japanese importers or by companies in which the international oil companies have only part-interests; its importers need consider nothing but Japanese conditions of supply in building vessels to carry oil there. The run from the Persian Gulf to the Japanese ports is a long one, but there are no canals involved to put restrictions on the draught of the vessels used; and Japan is relatively well served with deep-water harbours. These are ideal conditions for the big tanker.

The international oil companies who move oil from many sources to many markets have generally, in the past, put great emphasis upon the flexibility of their oil shipping. Any very large tanker is an investment of several million pounds; unless it can be used absolutely continuously it will be losing thousands of pounds a day as a cost of idleness. With the need for frequent change in the scheduling and pattern of a big company's oil movement, the big companies were for a long time more cautious than some independent owners in building the largest of vessels.

BP's 50,000-ton oil tanker *British Queen* in the Suez Canal

One thing that may have altered this, over the years, is simply the steady growth in oil consumption. As oil demand grows in Britain, for example, the employment of even a very large single tanker represents a smaller proportion of it. Oil profits may swell and decline: but the actual consumption of oil has never yet ceased growing. It becomes more possible to reserve large tankers for steady employment on the "base load" of supply, with complete confidence that once their employment becomes justified it is never likely to be called in question by any later dip in demand.

Terminals that can handle these giant vessels, again, are now becoming more widely available. Milford Haven, which now contains two oil refineries and will soon probably have another built, is one such place in Britain: Finnart, on Loch Long, which serves Grangemouth, is another. Shell has a terminal for very large tankers, though not as yet in the 100,000-ton class, near Ellesmere Port: and there are plans, which seem likely to gain the support of some of the oil companies at least, for a big offshore terminal in the mouth of the Thames Estuary, which could unload the big tankers and deliver the oil by pipe-line to Thames-side refineries. Esso, which will soon be getting large amounts of its crude oil for Fawley from Libya—a much shorter ocean voyage with no restrictive canals on the way—is planning to dredge a new deep channel in Southampton Water to allow giant tankers to supply its refinery there.

Many of the new areas from which oil is now beginning to be exported, such as Libya, Algeria and Nigeria, offer short sea hauls to Europe without restrictions on the size of vessels used; this is one of the advantages likely to accelerate their development. There is no area in the world yet discovered which has oil of anything like the plenitude or the cheapness of production of the Middle East; but some of it is a sight more conveniently placed for the European markets.

The fact that oil from these new sources will have a shorter distance to travel means that tankers won't be required in quite the total tonnages that was expected back in the mid-'50's, even if the same amount of oil is moved to market; and other developments such as the new pipe-lines from the Mediterranean to North Central Europe have the same effect. But these shorter, unimpeded tanker hauls that can be scheduled for rapid turn-round and steady operation are the ideal employment for giant tankers. So one can expect the steady switch to these larger vessels—making the middle-sized tankers of a few years ago more rapidly obsolete—to go on. It is one of the few elements in world shipping markets today which can offer the shipyards some small cheer.

Technicians and visitors watch a coil of steel emerging from the " pickling " baths at Colville's new cold reduction mill at Gartcosh, Lanarkshire

The first part of Colville's new £72,000,000 strip mill in Scotland is now in operation. This is the cold reduction mill at Gartcosh, producing highly-finished sheet steel for the motor, domestic appliance, steel furniture and container industries. When the hot strip mill at Ravenscraig starts up in the autumn, it is planned that of the 750,000 tons of strip produced annually, 500,000 tons will go to Gartcosh for finishing. Until that time, Gartcosh is being operated on bought-in coils. Like much of Europe, Russia has been suffering from a shortage of cold reduction mills, and one of Gartcosh's first contracts has been to cold reduce 48,000 tons of Russian steel. Operations at the mill can be divided into five sections—pickling (the removal of scale caused by oxidisation of the hot steel); cold reduction (reducing the strip in thickness—in this case by a tandem mill designed and manufactured by Davy and United Engineering Co.); annealing (re-softening the strip after cold-rolling); temper rolling (to give a reasonably hard surface); and shearing (cutting the strip into the required lengths). The four-stand tandem mill can roll 15,000 tons a week of strip up to 60 ins. wide and down to 0·011 in. thick. Ravenscraig and the associated Gartcosh plant are the result of the political decision some years back to site new strip mills in Scotland and Wales. The Welsh mill is Richard Thomas and Baldwin's Spencer works outside Newport, due to be completed this year.

Centrepiece at Gartcosh is the tandem mill, which can roll 15,000 tons of strip a week

Excavation work for the new semi-continuous hot strip mill at Ravenscraig

The new slabbing mill at Ravenscraig, due in operation next month, will roll the ingots, produced in the melting shops, into slab form to be charged into the hot strip mill

STEEL STRIP FOR SCOTLAND

AFRICAN TRAINING SCHEME

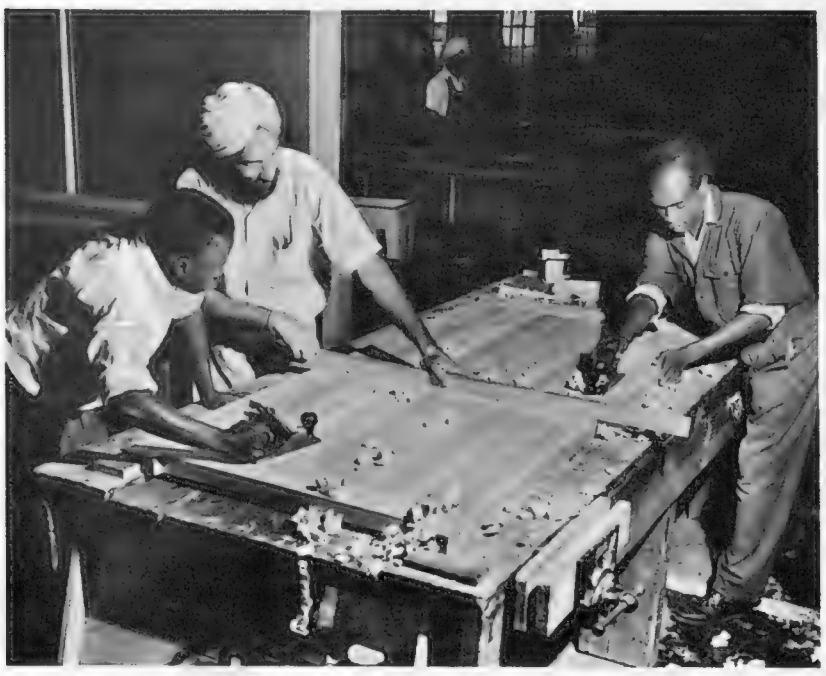
One of the most encouraging features of Africa today, which does not receive the publicity accorded to trouble-spots, is the number of schemes which help to satisfy the pressing African desire for some sort of training. One of these courses is that organised by the Nairobi Engineering District of the East Africa Railways and Harbours. Under the scheme, trainee supervisors and trainee apprentices of the district are employed on the construction of a new type Class III house at the Railway Training School. The trainees, all African, were taken in stages through the complete construction of the house. As far as the supervisory trainees were concerned, it meant starting with the preliminary works such as siting, indenting for materials, and all the documentary work involved in construction. The apprentice tradesmen worked alongside skilled artisans, and as they progressed they were given more responsibility enabling them to reach a reasonable level of competency in order to pass the standard tests in their particular trade. Other apprentices working in the District Engineer's Workshops were responsible for the joinery, ironmongery and other fitments. All the trainees had received background instruction in their respective trades from attending various trade and technical schools in East Africa.

The Assistant Architect at the Nairobi Railway Training School confers with two supervisors

An apprentice is shown how to set a plane

Shaping and welding rainwater fittings

A trainee supervisor instructs an apprentice



Two apprentice carpenters manufacture joinery under the guidance of a supervisor

A potential supervisor trainee helps two apprentices fix roof timbers

A general view of the construction of the Class III house showing the roof timbers being trimmed and fixed

A trainee supervisor is shown how to parge the flue of the chimney-stack

Teaching the laying of blocks and, **right:** the setting of concrete shuttering

A completed Class III one-storey house

COMPANY MEETING REPORT:

LLOYDS BANK LTD.

SIR OLIVER FRANKS ON BANK'S CONTINUED GROWTH DESPITE RESTRICTIVE FACTORS

COUNTRY'S ABILITY TO MEET CHALLENGE OF OVERSEAS COMPETITION

The Annual General Meeting of Lloyds Bank Limited will be held on February 9 at the Head Office, 71 Lombard St., London, E.C.3

In the course of his circulated statement the Chairman, **The Rt. Hon. Sir Oliver Franks, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., C.B.E.,** says:

This is the last time that, as Chairman, I shall be able to address the shareholders of the Bank. As you know, I am retiring from the Chair because I decided that I should return to Oxford University. It is a source of happiness to me that my colleagues have invited me to remain on the Board and continue to serve the Bank in this way. Your Bank is a great business and anyone who is asked to assume the office of Chairman must always feel it to be a very great privilege.

The Board have invited Mr. Harald Peake to succeed me at the conclusion of the forthcoming Annual General Meeting on February 9. He has been a member of the Board since 1941 and was appointed a Vice-Chairman in 1947, a Deputy Chairman last April.

Reviewing the domestic affairs of the Bank, Sir Oliver says:

CAPITALISATION PROPOSALS

Subject to the approval of the shareholders we intend, as has been announced, to increase the capital of the Bank by the issue of one fully paid share for every six shares held on January 5. The sum of £6,961,901 from the General Reserve will be applied in payment of the additional shares, the Reserve then being brought to £26 million by the transfer of £5,961,901 from inner reserves.

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT: The profit for the year at £4,935,069 is £329,075 higher than last year and the dividends paid and proposed total 11 per cent. which, on the capital as increased by the scrip issue in February 1961, is the nearest practicable equivalent to the charge for dividend in the accounts for 1960.

Despite the restrictive factors under which we have laboured, the business of the Bank continued to grow during the year. During the year we opened thirty-nine new offices. This progress has led to the need for a considerable increase in numbers of staff, and both staff and other administrative costs have continued to rise.

LAST YEAR IN PERSPECTIVE

I see little purpose in reviewing in detail the economic events of the past twelve months. In broad outline they repeat the same dreary pattern we have seen several times before.

The year has, in fact, seen two developments which suggest that in years to come we shall be living in a very different world from that of the '50's. First, there is our application to join the European Common Market. Whether in the end this is accepted or rejected, the decision to apply is clearly one of the turning points of our history. Most people in Britain, whether they support or oppose that decision, believe that things will be very different if we enter the Common Market; but I am sure that things will also be very different if in the end we do not enter it.

Then there has been a second development of more than transitory significance. I refer to the unmistakable change in the climate of economic opinion in this country. There is a new willingness to admit that the methods by which we have been conducting our economic life have not served us well. When we separate ethics from economics and desire to do the decent thing without at the same time thinking what is the efficient thing, this produces static policies designed to impede change when only by change and adaptation can we hope to live. There has been too general an acceptance of the idea that the economic system exists to produce jobs rather than goods. There is a general revulsion against stop and go as a way of life: the country has had enough of living on a switchback, with the general direction of movement felt to be, as on all switchbacks, downhill.

THE ALL-IMPORTANT QUESTION

Sir Oliver Franks then comments on the implications of the Common Market and reviews Britain's competitive position. The all-important question, to which only time can provide the answer, he says, is whether our poor export performance in recent years can be sufficiently explained by excessive demand at home, with such concomitants as relative indifference to export markets, deferred and unreliable delivery dates and mounting costs of production. If so, the remedy is obvious and is in our own hands. My own belief is that this is broadly the case and that we can succeed if our will is firm and our purpose clear.

Surprising though it may be to many, one of the few recent attempts at international comparison of costs leaves little doubt that Britain still ranks among the world's low-cost producers. This conclusion was reached by a scientific enquiry conducted in 1960 by the well-known American business research organisation, the National Industrial Conference Board.

It would seem that, so far as the general level of costs and prices is concerned, there is nothing to prevent us from meeting the challenge of overseas competition and regaining our former share of world markets. That will not happen unless we are prepared to put right the things we all know to be wrong with our economy; given that resolve, on the other hand, those very defects may be regarded as the hidden reserves that could enable us to mount a real export drive. But it is high time that the hidden reserves were drawn upon. The conclusion must be that the British have not as yet too much to fear from their overseas competitors; all they really have to fear is themselves.

INDUSTRY AND THE STOCK MARKET

INSURERS EXPAND

By "THE SPHERE" CITY CORRESPONDENT

With their usual promptness, the insurance companies have been announcing details of progress during 1961. From figures available so far, it is clear that the industry has established more new records. Prudential Assurance, for example, has reported new premium income in the life branches of £22,000,000, against rather less than £19,000,000 in the previous year.

This extra new business will not bring any immediate benefit for insurance companies' shareholders. The full benefits of this impressive growth will only appear years ahead, when new business begins to appear in investment portfolios. But these larger premiums do show that the demand for insurance continues to increase. Post-war experience in Britain, and parallel developments in the United States, strongly suggest that insurance is one of the most rapidly expanding sectors in a fully employed economy.

In terms of profits and assets, insurance companies can expand in two ways. One is through new business, while the second is the investment of new business proceeds in assets such as property or ordinary shares. It follows that anyone buying insurance equities is acquiring, first, an interest in the company's skill in expanding turnover. Second, investors are backing investment management skills, as expressed in the selection of an equity or property portfolio.

Insurance companies fall basically into two groups. One, which is the better known, comprises the life insurance firms. These, in turn, include a group of larger companies who carry out " industrial " or home service insurance business. The second group is made up of composite offices, namely, the insurance companies who have a large business in fire, accident and marine, as well as life work, and which often have a large stake outside this country. These companies, who form a different group from the life concerns, will be covered in a separate article next week.

Of all the British life companies, no doubt, the best known is Prudential Assurance, whose assets exceed £1,000,000,000. Premiums in the ordinary branch more than doubled in the ten years to 1960, while there was a marked rise in industrial branch premiums. Prudential have two classes of shareholders, whose profits are related respectively to the life and general side, and to the general side alone. Prudential "A" shares, whose dividend reflects the life and general business, have had their equity payment doubled in the last ten years. Holders of the " B " shares have done better in relative terms, partly because of the sharp increase in general branch investment earnings.

Pearl Assurance, which, with the Prudential, is the other well-known name in the British insurance world, has only one class of equity capital, whose dividends have also shown a useful increase. Thus the Pearl equity payment, which reached 55 per cent. in 1951, was raised to 90 per cent. for 1960.

A rather different investment policy has been followed by Legal and General Assurance, a large life office which has always placed a considerable proportion of its funds in property. Out of published assets of some £450,000,000 at the end of 1960, Legal and General showed nearly one-quarter in property and mortgages. Over recent years this policy has been reflected in rising income, and shareholders' dividend rate of 22½ per cent. effective in 1950 had reached the equivalent of no less than 190 per cent. last year.

Investors in insurance shares can select one of the large groups, which gives them an assured spread of risk, or one of the rather smaller concerns whose growth prospects may be rather larger. Among these smaller companies (with assets of rather less than £100,000,000) two well-known companies are Equity and Law Life, and London and Manchester Assurance.

Equity and Law, a £83,000,000 office, nearly trebled their premium receipts between 1956 and 1960—by any standards an impressive growth record. Over the same period, shareholders' dividend (declared with income-tax paid) has been raised from 29$\frac{7}{17}$ per cent. to 41$\frac{3}{17}$ per cent.

London and Manchester, similar in size to Equity and Law, featured in a take-over approach from Eagle Star which the London and Manchester rejected—though not without disagreement among themselves. This special position apart, London and Manchester have steadily enlarged their dividend, from an effective 35 per cent. in 1956 to last year's level of 53¾ per cent. Mr. Lewis Whyte, the new chairman, stated last summer that business had shown a satisfactory increase, without impinging on London and Manchester's traditional activities.

Insurance companies' expansion records, and the prospect of continuing growth, together make an impressive case for investing in insurance equities. But share buyers should note that current yields are not large—these growth possibilities have been widely noticed. There are also considerable differences between the results shown by various companies. Investors' best choice is probably to buy one of the leading life office shares, say Legal and General, plus one of the smaller companies such as Equity and Law. A third choice could include one of the composite offices, whose prospects will be discussed in the next article.

GOOD LIVING

By Ganymede

I cannot help feeling at times that all the wonderful technical advance of human progress is the enemy of gastronomy. This might appear, on the face of it, perhaps an over-gloomy view, but it cannot be denied that much of this progress, if not an open enemy, has an unfavourable effect. To take the worst of its effects one only has to remember all the substitutes that have been invented. Margarine, artificial cream and synthetic ice-cream for the millions cannot be regarded as anything but appalling by the gastronome, and not even their most ardent advocate can claim that they improve the general standard of appreciation of good food and drink by the public. And what of the more recent innovations of complete deep-frozen "dinners"? All you have to do is to pop the whole packet into the oven, and out comes your nourishment ready to eat, even with your eyes glued to the "telly."

This kind of development lowers the consumer's standards, and gastronomy, like any other art, can only thrive if it has an appreciative audience as well as its creative workers. Devastating though the effect of this "monstrous progress" might be, it is not all. Over-commercialised modern conditions of life in the countries of the highest civilisation also endanger some of the sources of the best raw materials.

A few years ago I visited one of the well-known makers of that superb delicacy, *foie gras*, in Strasbourg. The capital of Alsace has become the world centre of its production, mainly because the basic raw material, the liver of the fattened goose, was produced there.

During my visit I was shown the processes of marinading and cooking of the large goose livers while they were prepared for the different forms in which they appear on the world's markets, from the plain *foie gras nature* to the *parfaits*, *terrines* and *pâtés*. These products are exported everywhere from Strasbourg, and only the similar but lesser-known products of Périgord offer competition. It was most revealing to learn that in these modern times there are much fewer goose livers produced in Alsace, and that to satisfy the needs of this important local industry, they have to be imported from countries which have not yet risen from their simpler, agricultural conditions—namely, Poland and Hungary.

I am reminded of all this because I am told that there is a great shortage of truffles this year, owing to an exceptionally poor harvest. I am wondering—this, I admit, is pure conjecture—if perhaps too many houses or factories have been built in the areas where they grow? It would not surprise me at all. This noblest of all fungi, justly called "the diamond of the table" by Brillat-Savarin, grows below ground under certain species of oaks. The best grow in Périgord and in the Department of Lot, in France. Pigs find it by instinct, and dogs are specially trained to show the harvester where it is. Its heavenly flavour is miraculous, and equally miraculous is its ability to impart its flavour to other foods with which it is cooked. When it has done that, nothing but its decorative value remains. Many wonderful dishes can be prepared from fresh truffles. *Truffes sous la Cendre* is one of the classics; the fresh truffles are enveloped in bacon and cooking paper and then cooked in a utensil placed in the hot ashes of the fire. *Truffes au Champagne* is another preparation, and so is *Truffes à la Crème*. They are only a few of many, but alas, in this country we do not get fresh truffles and so cannot enjoy them.

Truffles preserved in jars or tins which have lost some of their flavour through being cooked are the next best thing, and these can be bought all over the world. They are used by professional chefs for flavouring and decoration. They are quite expensive, particularly this year when, owing to the scarcity, prices have shot up by about 30 per cent., but a very small quantity goes a long way. A 1-oz. tin, costing about 15s., is ample for a good-sized home-made *terrine*, which it will lift from the commonplace to the level of a delicacy. Truffles are so precious that even the peelings and trimmings are not wasted: they are preserved as well, and can be bought a little cheaper. Some experts say that they are even better when flavour is more important than looks. I hesitate to recommend the wider use of truffles in this country just now when they are short, but the fact remains that they are not used nearly enough simply because they are not known. When I telephoned one of the big stores to inquire about truffles, the girl on the switchboard tried to connect me to the confectionery department.

I have not been successful in finding small tins of *pelures de truffes* (peelings and trimmings) in London, having been unlucky during my last visit to France. I was in a small village there just after Christmas, where the grocer said he was sorry but he had sold out of them, explaining the great rush he had on them before Christmas. This goes to show how much they are used by everyone there. In London it is different. When in my quest I asked my very Continental butcher-grocer in Soho, I drew a blank too. I was told that he used to sell the trimmings some years ago, when he used them himself in some of the products for the *charcuterie* department. "We had to give up using them," he said, "when people started bringing back *terrines* and *pâtés* they had bought. They complained about the 'little black things' they found in them."

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MOTORING

BUYING THE AUCTIONEERS

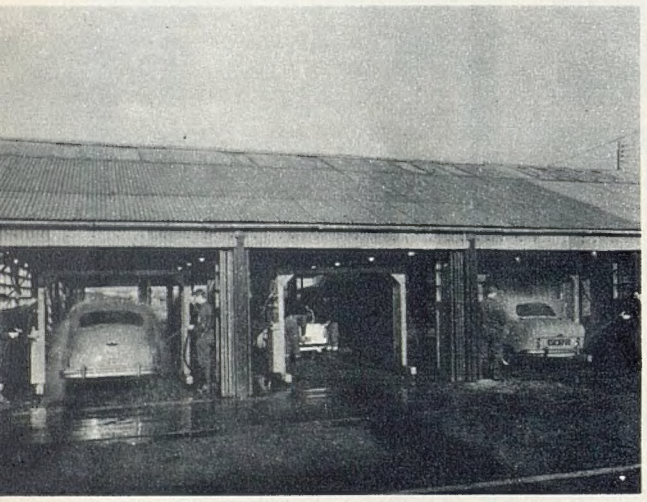
More about the new Vanden Plas Princess; planning Continental tours; and other topics

By **COURTENAY EDWARDS**

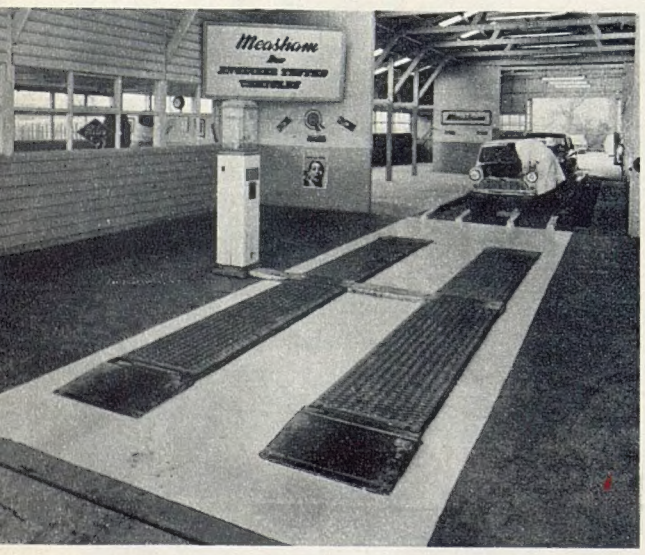
Purchase of the Measham Motor Sales organisation by Southern Counties Car Auctions gives the Wickins brothers an estimated 90 per cent. of all Britain's motor vehicle auction business. Mr. David Wickins, youngest of the four brothers who run Southern Counties and the one who started it all, tells me his expanded organisation will now be putting 2,000 cars and commercial vehicles under the hammer every week, on average, at fifteen different sales at ten widely separated centres: Farnborough, Hants, where Southern Counties was born in 1946; Chichester; Alexandra Palace; Tunbridge Wells; Birmingham; Oulton Park, Cheshire; Nottingham; Tewkesbury; Blackpool; and Measham.

Mr. David Wickins, who is forty-one, bought Measham for about £400,000 in cash. He started Southern Counties fifteen years ago with a capital of £400: the gratuity he received when he left the Royal Navy, in which he served as a lieutenant in Coastal Forces. In fifteen years his business has grown from 2,000 sales a year to a figure of 50,000. In 1950 Southern Counties sold 3,850 vehicles at an average price of £180 and the turnover was around £750,000. In ten years the business had grown to 30,000 sales a year at an average price of £285 and with a turnover of £8,500,000.

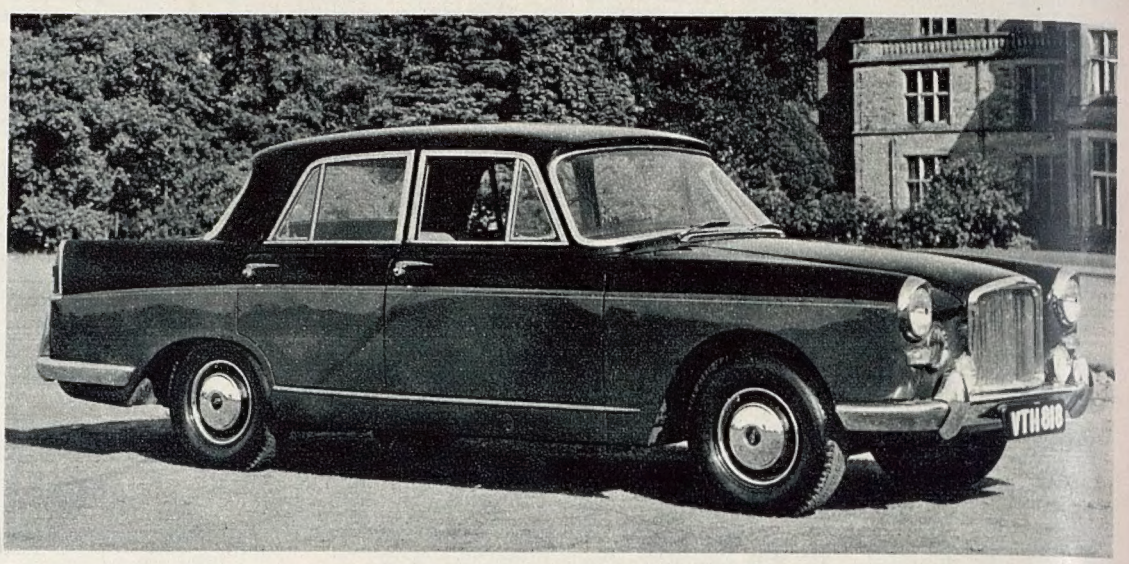
Mr. Wickins lives near Farnham, Surrey. His hobbies are sailing, riding and motoring (his favourite car being a Bentley). He is one of the most restlessly energetic, enterprising and courageous men I know.



Part of the valeting section at Measham Motor Sales Organisation Ltd., near Burton-on-Trent



One of the two vehicle testing bays at Measham



The new Vanden Plas 3-litre Princess Mk. II combines good looks with a 100-m.p.h. performance

When you can buy a car like the Vanden Plas 3-litre Princess Mk. II saloon for £1,626 including tax (you can have Borg-Warner automatic transmission for £73 extra) it is not surprising that the ranks of Britain's specialist producers of high-priced saloons are getting thinner and thinner.

For here is a car which benefits from both the production economies of the Austin 110 Westminster on which it is based and the skill of the Vanden Plas craftsmen who have turned a quantity-built saloon into a town carriage of dignified mien and great comfort.

With its luxury features and restrained good looks go a 100-m.p.h. performance, an engine of unusual flexibility and commendable road-holding. The 2,912-c.c., 6-cylinder engine is as docile in city traffic as it is mettlesome on the open road when the driver is in a hurry. Fuel consumption works out at around 20 miles to the gallon.

This Mk. II Princess benefits from the mechanical refinements to the British Motor Corporation's new Westminster. These include a new cylinder head, revised induction system, high-lift camshaft and stronger valve springs. The power plant now gives 120 brake horsepower at 4,750 r.p.m. (an increase of 12 b.h.p.) and in the model which has a manually-controlled gear-box incorporating a Borg-Warner overdrive you can now cruise at over 80 m.p.h. in the highest of the five available ratios with the engine turning over at only 3,000 r.p.m.

The model I road-tested had the Borg-Warner automatic box which worked very well. The only difficulty was faulty carburettor adjustment which made the engine liable to stall until it was really warm (and this can be very irritating with an automatic car).

They have lengthened the wheelbase by 2 ins. and this gives more passenger space as well as contributing to better road-holding. Typical of the aura of luxury which envelops this car is the use of hand-trimmed hide for the upholstery.

When the antiquated *carnet* system was virtually abolished many people thought the motoring organisations would experience a big slump in requests for help from members planning Continental motoring tours. They were wrong. They under-rated the value to motorists of the other forms of help offered in return for a fee of about £3 by the foreign touring services of the R.A.C. and the A.A.

That is why the R.A.C. is able to report that last year it handled 165,000 requests for foreign travel documents and car ferry bookings: an increase of nearly 30,000 on 1960.

Mr. Wilfrid Andrews, R.A.C. chairman, tells me the ever-growing popularity of foreign travel among motorists of all nationalities is also reflected in the fact that the number of foreign visitors to Britain—29,324—helped by R.A.C. port officers in 1961, showed an increase of 31 per cent. over 1960.

Mr. Andrews told me the R.A.C. had had a very busy year. "We increased the number of our main offices to twenty-two," he said, "by opening new premises at Croydon and Plymouth. Since the start of 1962 we have opened another new office at Watford. Under the management of Mr. W. S. MacKay it will cater for members in the Home Counties to the north of London including Essex, Middlesex and Hertfordshire.

"During 1961 we opened—at Wandsworth—the 100th R.A.C./A.C.U. training school for motor-cycle and scooter riders. The number of R.A.C.-registered driving instructors jumped by 607 to a total of 3,643 and there are now 268 registered driving schools: an increase of fifty-five."

Briefly. . . .

Martin Walter, of Folkestone, famous for their Dormobile motorised caravans, announce a new "Trailer Dormobile." It is a two-wheel trailer offering sleeping accommodation on foam mattresses for two adults. It weighs under 2 cwt., can be towed by the smallest cars and costs £99. There is no purchase tax. . . . In 1961 the Volkswagen factory built more than a million vehicles in a year for the first time. Total was 1,006,782. Among them was the 5,000,000th V.W. to be built. Production in 1961 increased by 13 per cent. and 580,210 cars were exported, including more than 200,000 to the U.S. At the turn of the year daily V.W. output was about 4,200 cars, including 200 of the new 1500 model. . . .

At a meeting in Monte Carlo next week of the C.S.I., international "Parliament" of motor sport, newly-elected delegates from Russia will put forward some revolutionary proposals. They want an international rally championship (the programme for which would presumably include a rally in the U.S.S.R.) and a world Formula Junior championship based on the knockout system. . . . Garages can now buy for £150 from the Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing Co. a portable bonding machine capable of producing number plates for new or repaired cars in about four minutes. The compact machine does its work with the aid of a vacuum pump and infra-red heat. It uses Scotchlite material for the letters and numbers. . . .

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